Thursday, January 14, 2010 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 25 / No. 37 P18

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SHOCK AND PAIN are etched on the face of this boy as he is treated for injuries at the Hotel Villa Creole in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince after the strongest earthquake in more than 200 years struck Haiti, the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. "Catastrophic" has been used to describe the destruction and loss of lives. At left is an image map of Haiti furnished by the US Geological Survey. AFP

Earthquake shatters Haiti

All 179 RP troops safe, says military

ALL FILIPINO PEACEKEEPERS serving with the United Nations forces in Haiti are safe, the military said yesterday.

"The good thing is that none of our Filipino peacekeepers have been harmed by the earthquake," Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner said over local television.

The spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines said the Filipino mission's commander, Lt. Col. Lope Dupry, borrowed a satellite phone to call Manila and asked his wife to relay the good news to the authorities here.

The Department of Foreign

ALL 179 A8

Nene: Garci boys intact, promoted

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE "GARCI" BOYS WERE NEVER kicked out. They were just promoted.

Elections Chair Jose Melo should fulfill his promise to "ground" officials implicated in rigging the 2004 and 2007 polls, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said yesterday.

NENE: GARCI A11

STAGGERING A Haitian woman is trapped in the rubble along with two others in Port-au-Prince after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake rocked the impoverished Caribbean nation, toppling buildings, including the presidential palace and the UN peacekeeping headquarters. AP

Puno: Chief Justice crucial in election but ...

By TJ Burgonio and Norman Bordadora

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO THINKS his position should not be left vacant during an election year, but defers to the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to rule whether President Macapagal-Arroyo can name his successor in the last 90 days of her term.

Puno yesterday agreed that it was crucial to have a sitting Chief Justice and a "full court" to resolve cases that are expected to be filed in connection with the May national elections.

"The judiciary is the third major branch of government and necessarily it is a critical institution, especially because of the coming national and local elections where we anticipate there will be a lot of important issues that will be elevated to the high court," he told reporters in Malacañang when asked how crucial it was to have a sitting Chief Justice after the elections.

Puno said it was speculative to conclude that a failure to name his successor after the elections would lead to a constitutional crisis.

PUNO: CHIEF A6

SC: No pressure, please, to affirm Comelec rulings

By TJ Burgonio

MAYWAY JOBS.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno yesterday shrugged off Malacañang's wish that the Supreme Court affirm the rulings of the Commission on Election (Comelec) on disqualification cases to avoid a costly repetition of

SC: NO PRESSURE A6

Untold numbers trapped in ruins

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI—Haitians piled bodies along the devastated streets of their capital on Wednesday after the strongest earthquake hit the poor Caribbean nation in more than 200 years crushed thousands of structures, from humble shacks to the National Palace and the UN peacekeeping headquarters.

Untold numbers were still trapped in the rubble of collapsed buildings in Haiti's capital of about 2 million people.

Estimates of the death toll ranged from hundreds to thousands but with every hour passing, it was becoming clear that the destruction and loss of life from Tuesday afternoon's 7.0-magnitude tremor was catastrophic.

International Red Cross spokesperson Paul Conneally said an estimated 3 million people may have been affected by the quake and that it would take a day or two for a clear picture of the damage to emerge. Clouds of dust thrown up by

EARTHQUAKE A2

YELLOW LINE Quezon City Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes arrives in Camp Crame, Quezon City, for the trial. MIKE ALQUINAN

AMPATUAN MASSACRE

Andal Jr. fired first, says witness

By Cathy C. Yamsuan and Marlon Ramos

"THEY BEGGED FOR THEIR lives ... [but] they made sure no one would survive."

Using high-powered guns, Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr. and his uncle slew dead Gerardo Mangudadatu and two companions, maimed other members of the convoy and again fired on the three corpses in their presence.

This was part of the account of Ampatuan Vice Mayor Kamel Sangki, who testified yesterday that before they were killed, the wife of Buluan Vice Mayor Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu and her sister-in-law Bai Hilon begged for their lives, and journalist Jimmy Rafols—who hosted a number of shows during town celebrations—repeatedly reminded Ampatuan Jr. that they knew each other.

In his testimony delivered in

ANDAL JR.: A10

WHERE HE BELONGS Andal Ampatuan Jr. inside his cell at NBI headquarters. NOEL CELIS/AFP

I WAS THERE, says Sangki, witness for the prosecutors. RAFFY LERMA

Who is Vice Mayor Sangki?

By Nash B. Maulana
Inquirer Mindanao

AMPATUAN, MAGUINDANAO—Ampatuan Vice Mayor Raid Sangki dropped out of college at the Catholic-run Notre Dame University in Cotabato City to run for mayor in May 2004, when the first nine-year term of his father, Mayor Zacaria Sangki, ended.

Sangki is the only son and the third in a brood of four. He and his father sought the mayoral and vice mayoral posts, respectively, unopposed.

Ampatuan residents describe Sangki, now 30, as a lean and mean young man of few words.

WHO IS VICE: A11

JPE urged to quit post in case election fails

By Gil C. Cabunegan Jr.

SENATE PRESIDENT JUAN Ponce Enrile should give way to a peer whose term will end in 2013 to ensure a smooth transfer of power in case of a failure of elections in May, a lawmaker said yesterday.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Eduardo Nonoy Jones said the military could take over should no clear winner in the presidential race emerge and the three people in the line of succession—Vice President, Senate President and House Speaker—leaving office together with the President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The Senate should choose among the remaining 12 senators with three more years in office so that if there will be a failure of elections, we will have an acting president," Jones said.

The lawmaker has authored House Bill No. 3104, which pro-

JPE UNDER A11

Bro. Eddie tells Noynoy: 'Diyos at Bayan,' that's my slogan

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

IS THERE A COPYRIGHT TO THE SLOGAN "Diyos at Bayan" (God and Country)?

For evangelist and presidential candidate Eduardo "Brother Eddie" Villanueva Jr., most-running rival Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III appears to be intruding his long-time political mantra.

The Bangon Pilipinas standard-bearer

BRO. EDDIE: A6

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

PAANO YUNG MGA MAG-BAYAD SA?

PCSO

3 23 14 19 13 18
SUPER 6/49
4 8 4 5 8 0
ULTRA LOTTO 6/58
5 5 1 6 1 8 1
MEGA LOTTO 6/45
8 11 12 21 23 30
P20,028,303.40

LTO stops tagging vehicles

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE HAS suspended the mandatory electronic tagging of motor vehicles after the Supreme Court issued a restraining order against its radio frequency identification (RFID) registration scheme.

Motor vehicle owners will therefore be allowed to register or renew the registration of their vehicles without having to get the RFID tags, said a memorandum from LTO Chief Arturo Lomibao.

In an en banc session on Tuesday, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order, that is, that the situation return to the one prevailing before the government program was implemented.

Militant party-list and transport groups have questioned the constitutionality and legality of the RFID before the high court, saying it would violate people's privacy.

They also said the LTO project did not go through a public bidding.

Complying with SC

The high tribunal ordered the Department of Transportation and Communication to file its comment on the petitions by Friday.

Lomibao said the LTO "had complied with the Supreme Court order and temporarily suspended the RFID implementation despite the agency's not having received a copy of the court decision yet.

He said the LTO's lawyers would study the high court ruling once they receive it, to see whether vehicle owners who have already gone through the RFID registration process and paid for it should be refunded.

The RFID tags cost an additional P200 when vehicles are registered.

Ralph Recto, the former socioeconomic planning secretary and a candidate for senator in 2010, said motorists who paid for the RFID should be refunded now instead of the money being applied to any future transactions with the LTO, as has been suggested.

"The principle that must be observed here is that you must be reimbursed for a service that has been cancelled; it isn't to pay one and be refunded months later," he said.

"If the payment is due and demandable, then the refund must also be due and demandable," Recto said.

Erich Ryan Mendoza Ong, the private company with the exclusive right to provide information technology-enabled premium and services to the LTO, showed that as of this month, about 50,000 cars have been tagged with RFIDs.

Groups in favor

Despite the opposition of some groups, Lomibao pointed out that several transport groups actually support the reforms.

Groups like the party-list 1-United Transport Koalisyon support the RFID, Lomibao said, because "according to them, this would help solve the age-old problem of unwise vehicles [or] illegally operating passenger vehicles)." With Philip C. Tubeo

JUSTICES AT THE PALACE Chief Justice Reynato Puno and 11 other Supreme Court justices applaud as President Macapagal-Arroyo congratulates the latest appointed magistrate in the High Court, Associate Justice Jose C. Mendoza, after his oath-taking in Malacañang yesterday. The justices are (from left): Jose Perez, Roberto A. Abad, Mariano del Castillo, Lucas Bersamin, Diosdado Peralta, Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Antonio Eduardo Nachura, Presbitero Velasco Jr., Conchita Carpio-Morales, Renato Corona, Arturo Brion and Puno. Ms Arroyo took the occasion to announce the enactment of the law granting additional retirement and other benefits to judges. (Jonas Bal Gutiba)

Mayon alert level lowered to 2

LEGAZPI CITY—THE PHILIPpine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology lowered Mayon Volcano's alert level from three to two on Wednesday morning, after its activities continued to simmer down.

In its 7 a.m. bulletin, the Phivolcs said that lowering the alert level to two, means "further reduction in the likelihood of hazardous eruption."

Since 12 January 2010, when Phivolcs lowered the alert level to Alert Level 3, a further decline in the overall activity of Mayon Volcano was noted," it said.

Phivolcs said only six volcanic earthquakes were recorded in the past 24 hours.

"The lack of remarkable seismic events, such as harmonic tremors, suggests no active transport of magma to shallow levels," Phivolcs said.

Instruments used to measure ground deformation also showed a return of the volcanic edifice to a deflated state, suggesting that no pressure building up had taken place.

The sulfur dioxide (SO2) emission rate was measured at an average of 597 tons per day from a high of 2,627 tons a day.

Phivolcs added that no ashfall/s has been observed since Dec. 29.

The agency said that if the activity of the volcano continues or declines, then the alert level can be lowered to alert level 1.

But Phivolcs said the lowering the alert level "should not be interpreted that the source of the volcano has ceased." It added that if the volcano starts to act up again, the alert level can be raised back to alert level 3.

It also reminded the public not to enter the six-kilometer radius Permanent Danger Zone and the seven-km Extended Danger Zone on the southeast side of the volcano.

Albay Gov. Joey Salceda has ordered the full deactivation of the remaining evacuees of Bonsupay Anahaw to Camalig Elementary School and Barangay Bañadero in Daraga town.

Disaster officials said the province had shifted focus to the cold front threatening the province.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the cold front was threatening the province with landslides, flashfloods and gale warnings.

Roy M. Stuart, Inquirer Southern Luzon with Alcuin Papa in Manila

Solar eclipse at sunset

Phenomenon to occur tomorrow

By Alcuin Papa

IF YOU NOTICE HALF OF THE SUN missing during sunset tomorrow, don't fret.

A partial solar eclipse is set to occur at sunset on Jan. 15.

An eclipse during sunset is rare, even and would be a good viewing opportunity for the public, especially over Manila Bay, said Frederick Gabriosa, a professor at the Rizal Technological University's astronomy department, the only one in the country.

"People can just rush or troop to Manila Bay to observe the eclipse. It's a real treat to see an eclipse while enjoying the Manila Bay sunset," Gabriosa said.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the eclipse will start at 5:49 p.m. The peak of the eclipse will occur at 6:03 p.m. and end at 6:24 p.m.

Moreno Mendoza will see 38.1 percent of the sun's diameter covered by the moon, Pagasa said.

Covered setting sun

Sunset tomorrow will come at 6:48 p.m., said Gabriosa.

"Since the viewer will enjoy before the eclipse ends, the sun will be setting while covered. By 6 p.m., the sun will seem to touch the horizon," he said.

He also said that since the earth is at its perihelion stage—the point in its orbit at which it is nearest the sun—this means the sun will appear as a large ball.

Gabriosa warned that despite the eclipse occurring at sunset, viewers must still observe the same safety precautions as when viewing an eclipse at noon.

"Even if the eclipse is occurring at sunset, there are still infrared rays coming through," he said.

He recommends using a No. 4 welder's filter, or a neutral density 4 filter.

In an earlier interview, Cynthia Celebre, officer in charge of Pagasa's research, development and training division, warned people not to look directly at the sun through a partial or total solar eclipse as it can damage the eyes.

Best view

She advised people to view the eclipse from Pagasa's Astronomical Observatory building inside the University of the Philippines campus. There they can safely view the eclipse using instruments and a Mylar filter, which she said is the safest filter to view an eclipse.

Celebre also said viewing an eclipse through its reflection on a basin of water should be done especially.

Pagasa said the eclipse magnitude, or the percentage of the sun's diameter covered by the moon, will be highest at 50.8 percent in Lalayan island off Cagayan province.

In Luna City the eclipse magnitude will be at 48.8 percent. The eclipse magnitude will be lowest in General Santos City at 12.6 percent.

Around the world, the eclipse will be viewed as an annular eclipse, meaning the moon will not cover the whole of the sun, as in a total eclipse. Instead, the sun will appear as a bright ring around the moon.

This eclipse will be visible from a path that goes across central Africa, the Indian Ocean and eastern Asia. The maximum eclipse occurs in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

The Jan. 15 eclipse will be the longest solar eclipse in terms of duration since 1991.

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Panasonic
PBX Telephone System
• Call Transfer
• Music On Hold
• Call Pickup
• Intercom

Shell V-Power

Shell V-Power upgrades your car to a 2010 Audi TT.

Every PhP 500 single or accumulated purchase of Shell V-Power earns you a special sticker. Collect 8 stickers on your Shell V-Power card to get a special limited edition Shell V-Power cap and qualify for the raffle for a chance to win your very own 2010 Audi TT*. The Shell V-Power card also comes with special offers which you can avail at participating Shell Service stations. Promo runs until March 25, 2010.

Shell V-Power. Designed for improved performance, whatever you drive.

*2010 Audi TT coupe 2.0 Turbo FSI Direct Shift. Image may vary from actual unit.

Shell

IT'S NOT JUST SKIN CARE. IT'S facial care.

25% OFF

Facial Care's Express Facelift
ReFirme
upon enrollment from Jan. 11 to 14, 2010 only!

Call today and book your FREE consultation!

facial care CENTRE

Call 892-SKIN (7546)

MAKATI • ORTIGAS • TOMAS MORATO • BINONDO • ALABANG • SM MY • CONGRESSIONAL • PAMPANGA (781-3434) • CEBU (233-7601)

RP transsexuals nabbed in Japan for fake marriages

POLICE NEAR TOKYO SAID ON Wednesday they had arrested three Japanese men and their transsexual "wives" from the Philippines for faking their marriage registrations.

The Philippine nationals used the identification papers of women in their home country to pretend they were free to remarry so they could marry their Japanese partners, police said.

One couple, a 35-year-old Japanese firefighter and his 40-year-old restaurateur partner, allegedly submitted a marriage document to the Ota city government north of Tokyo in 2007 using the real name of a Filipina woman.

The marriage allowed the transsexual Japanese firefighter in the Philippines to obtain a visa and an alien registration photo ID card under the Filipina's name.

Another couple, a 32-year-old Japanese man and a 42-year-old transsexual, were arrested in a similar case, said a spokesperson at Saitama prefectural police north of Tokyo.

The two couples have been indicted for faking documents, but their trials have not yet started, the police affiliated said.

The couples met at transsexual bars and had been living together until they were arrested last month, he said.

The transsexuals "wanted to live without difficulties while working in Japan," the police official said.

A third couple were arrested last year and convicted of faking the documents, receiving suspended prison terms.

AFP

SC unseats Cebu solon

THE SUPREME COURT HAS ousted Cebu Rep. Benhur Salimbangon as the duly elected congressman of the province's fourth district less than six months before the term runs out on June 30.

In a 22-page decision penned by Associate Justice Martin Villarama Jr., the full court declared Celestino Martinez III the winner of the congressional election in 2007 over Salimbangon, who served as the district's congressman for more than two years.

The Supreme Court reversed the verdict of the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET) that upheld Salimbangon's victory despite a Commission on Elections resolution that declared Martinez's namesake a nuisance candidate and that should have resulted in more votes being credited to Martinez.

Final, executory

The decision, the Supreme Court said, was final and immediately executory.

Fourteen justices, including Chief Justice Reynato Puno, concurred in the decision. Associate Justice Antonio Eduardo Nachura, a former congressman, took no part as he was a member of the HRET that earlier decided on Gladiator's election protest.

"Respondent HRET gravely abused its discretion tantamount to lack or excess of respondent Salimbangon as the duly elected representative of the fourth legislative district of Cebu despite the final outcome of revision showing 1,401 ballots still only "Martinez" or "C. Martinez" written on the line for representative," the Court said.

"[These votes] should have been properly counted in favor of petitioner and [not] nullified as stray votes, after considering all relevant circumstances clearly establishing that such votes could not have been intended for Rabbi C. Martinez' who is a bona fide congressional candidate in a final judgment," it added.

Unlike C. Martinez, a bakal-bato] (a palay, sulfay manok-pulot driver, filed a certificate of candidacy for congressman, but was disqualified as a nuisance candidate by the Comelec.

The disqualification, however, became final only after the elections.

The Supreme Court said that ballots indicating only the similar surname of two candidates for the same position, in appropriate cases be counted in favor of the bona fide candidate.

"Accordingly the 5,481 votes for 'Martinez' or 'C. Martinez' should be credited to petitioner giving a total of 72,006 votes as against 67,208 total votes of the private respondent," the Supreme Court said.

Petitioner, thus, garnered more votes than private respondent with a winning margin of 4,848 votes," it added.

ANG LADLAD

Bishops assail SC ruling on gay party

By Dona Pazzibugan

CATHOLIC BISHOPS ASSAILED THE Supreme Court ruling giving the gay party-list group Ang Ladlad provisional accreditation with the Commission on Elections, insisting that gays do not need separate representation in Congress since all laws apply to them anyway.

The Church leaders said they are also concerned that, once in Congress, Ang Ladlad will push for "measures" repugnant, like legalizing same-sex marriage.

"They do not need representation. All laws are intended for men and women, gay or lesbian," Bontoguan Bishop Crispin Varquez told the Church-owned Radio Veritas.

'Very dangerous'

Varquez (traditionally) opposed to the idea of a party-list representative for gays, saying putting Ang Ladlad in office would be "very dangerous."

"There's a big possibility that they will push for same-sex marriage. We already in favor of pro-marital sex and we say they should not be allowed in the party-list elections," Varquez said.

"What will happen to our government and society if all the lawmakers are elected to office are involved?" he said.

While the Church maintains that it is not against homosexuals, it denounces what it calls "immoral homosexual sexual practices."

Nonetheless Bishop Ernesto Salcos Antonio, one of the framers of the 1987 Constitution that provided for party-list representation in Congress, said he was not opposed to giving gays a voice as a party-list group "but they should exercise responsibility."

He said he was also concerned about the advocacies that Ang Ladlad would promote in Congress, like the legalization of same-sex marriage.

"If they will be given a voice, they also have to have responsible advocacies. We are worried that they will promote bills that could destroy society," he said in Filipino.

Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes and Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez said they too were not in favor of Ang Ladlad's accreditation.

"There is an abnormality in the situation. The Supreme Court should explain why they recognized this group," Iñiguez said.

"I think the Comelec is right in disqualifying Ang Ladlad. I believe such a party-list group will not redound to the good of this nation," Bastes said.

Bataan Bishop Gaudencio Rosales and Antipolo Auxiliary Bishop Francisco de Leon said they could not comment as a party-list representative for gays in the first place.

Accepted in society

Cubao said regular congressmen are expected to represent their constituents, including gay people.

"They are accepted by society in general and well-represented, especially in entertainment, so there is no need to represent them in Congress," De Leon said.

Fr. Melvin Castro, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on Family and Life, said it was not good to have a separate category for gay rights.

"It only puts society in danger. There are more marginalized sectors like the fisherfolk and indigenous people who should be given a chance in Congress. All have an interest. Do we also need women, who like gays or lesbians," he said.

"We expect them but we cannot hold them in their stand that once in Congress they would not push for same-sex marriage or any issue that is immoral in the eyes of the Catholic Church," Castro said.

Lucita Dizon; 65

LUCITA D. DIZON, 65/65 SURVIVE ALL HER single life as a public school teacher, died on Jan. 10 at the age of 65.

Arebeng, as she was fondly called by colleagues, will be interred at the Wendelyn Memorial Cemetery after she 6 p.m. Mass at the Holy Cross Chapel in Wegara, Hinatuan,ong City on Saturday.

She was a native of Alloga, Nueva Ecija and served long at the San Joaquin Elementary School in Surig City.

Dr. Prieto to keynote cardiology meet

ALEJANDRO RUFINO PRIETO, MD., FACC, a cardiologist from Michigan State University, has been chosen to be the keynote speaker and guest lecturer during the 18th national annual convention on preventive cardiology of the Foundation for Lay Education on Heart Diseases, Inc. (FLEHD), Inc. to be held at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium of SLSC Plaza in Makati City on Jan. 28-30 with the theme "Celebrating 10 years of pioneering work in Preventive Cardiology educational programs."

Dr. Adolfo L. Bautista, founding president of FLEHD and chair of the organizing committee of the convention, said Dr. Prieto will talk on "Preventive Cardiology: The better way to slash cardiovascular mortality and morbidity" during the opening ceremony.

On the second day, he will discuss at noontime "Interventional procedures in the management of non-coronary diseases." His third and last topic will be on "Management of peripheral vascular diseases in the primary care setting" at 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 30.

Dr. Prieto graduated from and took his post-graduate internship at the University of Santo Tomas. He had a six-month residency training in Internal Medicine at Medical Medical Center and a three-year Internal Medicine residency training at Michigan State University Associated Hospitals in Lansing, Michigan, where he also completed a three-year fellowship program in Cardiology (serving as chief fellow on his last year), and a year of basic research in Cardiology after which he was appointed associate professor in the Department of Medicine.

He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, the Cardiovascular Disease Board and the Interventional Cardiology Board. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a fellow of the Society of Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions.

Prieto won numerous awards of excellence in teaching, and in research paper contests, and has published numerous papers relevant to his specialty field.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, January 14, 2010
1st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Sm 4:1-11
Gospel: Mk 1:40-45

If you want to, you can make me clean. Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will, be clean." The leprosy left the man at once and he was cleansed. Then, sternly, he sent him away at once, saying to him, "See you tell anyone about this, but go and show yourself to the priest and for the cleansing bring the offering ordered by Moses, as that way you will make your declaration."

However, as soon as the man went out, he began spreading the news everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter any town, but even though he stayed in the open country, people came to him from everywhere.

Commentary:

"If you want to, you can make me clean"

Whenever we reach out and touch the love of those who receive...
the hungry, the lonely, the sick, the poor...
...others see what our own sense of the theirs, in Jesus did,
are known who leaders from ministries to be.

(Servant Communications Foundation, Inc., 4 Mary and St. [illegible] Subdivision, Quezon City, 1102 Tel. [illegible] Fax [illegible] E-mail [illegible] Web [illegible] Publication Permit No. [illegible] Registered [illegible] Registered [illegible] Quezon City. A registered [illegible] Registered [illegible])

Nene: Garci boys intact, promoted

From page A1

Pimentel said the Commission on Elections (Comelec) should particularly "pass on the bruised" those officials who conspired with then Commissioner Virgilio "Garci" Garcillano in "rigging forays" (vote-padding and vote-dumping) operations in 2004, when opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. was cheated of votes to oust ex-Mindoro governor where it was still known he had strong support.

Explain SumaRipac

Pimentel said the Comelec should explain why Ike Sumalipao had stayed on as Comelec-ARMM regional director "despite ample evidence of his role as church accomplice in rigging operations" in Maguindanao in 2004.

"Having evaded sanctions for his wrongdoing," Sumalipao was promoted from provincial election supervisor in Lanao del Sur to the top position in the Comelec-ARMM office, Pimentel said, adding:

"If only to put across the message that it is taking serious steps to clean up its house, the Comelec should fire or reassign Mr. Sumalipao as a rule where he can do no damage to the electoral process.

"Perhaps he should be sent to Pag-asa to tend to the lighthouse."

"So long as known assassins of Garci, him are occupying sensitive posts in the Comelec, there will be apprehensions over attempts by sinister forces to manipulate and subvert the electoral process," the senior Pimentel said in a statement.

Pimentel said he had "recommended inquiries as well as investigative reports by the aforesaid indicated the involvement of Garcillano and his team of Comelec operatives in the manipulation of the 2004 presidential election, particularly in the provinces of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

For all that, he lamented, the so-called "Garci boys" had been promoted and not dismissed and/or criminally prosecuted.

Charges still under study

He said Melo should act immediately particularly because Comelec law department chief Femando Salonga had reportedly recommended the filing of administrative and criminal charges against the erring election officers.

Contacted for comment, Salonga said the Comelec en banc had yet to rule on the charges against Sumalipao and others.

Salonga said his recommendation was still being studied by the commissioners.

"They are not yet convinced," he said, adding that Sumalipao had denied wrongdoing.

Gang's all here

Citing media reports, Pimentel said the other "Garci boys" were holding high posts in the:

- Senate: A. Magbanua, who was promoted from assistant regional director to Persons Mindanao as regional director of the Comelec in Northern Mindanao;
- Tomasino Pabe, an Agusan del Sur election officer who was promoted assistant regional director in Caraga;
- Benjamin Macarambon, the vice-chair of the Lanao del Sur board of provincial board of canvassers who was later installed himself as barangay affairs at the Comelec main office.

According to Pimentel, it was Magbanua who informed Garcillano of the disappearance of an election officer in a town in Basilan who was canvassing certificates of canvass and election returns.

It was also Magbanua who purportedly suggested that family members of the missing poll officer be kidnapped to force the officer to vote here.

Pabe is said to have identified himself as "Danny" in "Hello Garci" tapes—recordings of purported conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Garcillano after the balloting in 2004.

Macarambon was purportedly summoned by Garcillano in the same tapes as the "point man."

Out from hiding

The "Hello Garci" scandal erupted in July 2005.

In August 2005, the Singaporean government told the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs that Garcillano stopped at the city-state on July 14, 2005, en route to an undisclosed destination.

Garcillano surfaced on Dec. 4, 2005. He said he was in the country the whole time, in the homes of Muslim friends in Mindanao, reading and writing his memoirs.

As proof, he submitted two passports to the House of Representatives. One had no entry showing he had left the Philippines.

But one of the passports—with validity from Feb. 11, 2002, to Feb. 11, 2007—was found to be false by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in March 2006.

Cases vs Garci dismissed

Later in 2006, the Department of Justice dismissed all charges of perjury and falsification of legal documents filed against Garcillano by a number of lawmakers.

He ran for congressman in the first district of Bukidnon in an independent constituency in 2007, and lost.

In a phone interview with the Inquirer in July 2009, Garcillano said the Comelec should ensure the holding of automated polls in May 2010.

He said it would speed up the counting of votes and proclamation of winners, and eliminate protracted election protests. With reports from Kristine Alave and Alan Feliciano, Inquirer Research

IMMEDIATE OXYGEN SAVES LIFE
OXYPURE
0922-8302122
www.tareasmed.net

idac
Split Type Wall Mounted Aircon
1hp-P16,500
FREE INSTALLATION

Paborito ni Dagoy!*
Mang INASAL
*ILOILO Dinagyang Festival 2010
January 22-24, 2010
Iloilo City, Philippines
www.dinagyangiloilo.com
Hahanap-hanapin mo ... ♪♫♩
UNLIMITED RICE!
ON ALL PABORITO MEALS
www.manginasal.com

SLIMMERS WORLD
BUY 1 MONTH GET 1 MONTH FREE!
PLUS! Personal Training & all the Latest Aerobics!
SPECIAL OFFER
GOOD UNTIL 10PM TONIGHT!!!
Great Body, Great Skin.
I Lost 45 lbs.!
Runner-Up in the Great Body Contest, Lauren Raina Tan
BEFORE
"All our full programmes are guaranteed!"
CALL NOW FOR YOUR FREE CONSULTATION!!!
MEN CAN HAVE GREAT SKIN TOO!
FREE DIAMOND ULTRAPEEL TREATMENT
BOOK NOW! AT OUR FACE & SKIN CLINIC
+ NO MONTHLY DUES ON LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP!
+ NO JOINING FEES!
+ CREDIT CARD OPTIONS AT 0% MEDICAL SUPERVISION AT ALL CENTERS
BUY 15 TREATMENTS GET 15 FREE!
SPECIAL OFFER
GOOD UNTIL 10PM TONIGHT!!!
Diamond Facial
FACIAL WITH DIAMOND ULTRAPEEL to give you a flawless skin.
CALL OUR ONE - STOP SUPER CENTERS FOR FITNESS, SKIN, BODY AND FACE
FITNESS HOTLINE: 536-3333
SKIN HOTLINE: 525-8771
MOBILE NUMBER: 0917- SLIMMERS (7546637)
www.slimmersworld.com.ph * inquire@slimmersworld.com.ph

SC: No pressure, please

From page A1

bidders and upon preparations for the May 10 automated ballot.

"We say we may or may it is our constitutional duty to review these decisions and find out if there is a grave abuse of discretion," Puno told reporters in Malacañang.

He indicated that the High Court would not reverse or overrule its own justices and the signing of the Public Act No. 9946 granting additional retirement benefits for members of the judiciary in Malacañang.

Comelec can't dictate on SC

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, for his part, agreed that the Comelec could not dictate on the court.

"I suppose the intention of Mr. Melo and the Comelec is to send a message to the Supreme Court that there's got to be an early resolution of the cases," he told reporters.

"They need some time to include the names of those whose cases might be overturned in the official ballots."

Ermita, however, said the appeal of Sarmiento could be turned down.

Lanz Geronimo, the Comelec approved the presidential candidacies of eight politicians out of 99 certificates filed. The initial list of candidates included eight vice presidential and 10 senatorial candidates.

The high profile appeals to overturn their disqualification from the presidential race included Senator Perlas, an environmentalist and former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

The Comelec is finalizing the list of candidates in preparation for the ballot printing, which starts on Jan. 15. With a report from Ed Inciong C. Abaya

Puno: Chief Justice crucial in election

From page A1

"I am not sure it will reach that point. That's all in the speculative realm," he said.

Puno, however, declined to comment on the issue of whether Mr. Arroyo could name a new Chief Justice in the remaining 46 days of her term, saying this would be on the agenda of the JBC on Monday.

"That's a hypothetical problem. I would rather not give any opinion on that issue," he said when asked if Mr. Arroyo should let the next President appoint his successor.

Puno said the high tribunal could function without its chief magistrate, but it would be a difficult transition even during short periods.

Should be full court

"It can function but it is a difficult time when you tackle the issue of whether the continuing validity of cancellation for grounds which it tackles very sensitive political issues," he said.

Puno chairs the Presidential Electoral Tribunal that acts as a judge of cases relating to the election, returns and qualifications of candidates for positions of President and Vice-president.

Puno is set to retire on May 17, or 46 days before Mr. Arroyo steps down on June 30. He is the only one among the 15 members of the tribunal who was not appointed by the incumbent.

Citing a Supreme Court ruling, Franklin Drilon, head of the Liberal Party and a senatorial candidate, said Mr. Arroyo was "neither required to make appointments to the courts nor allowed" to do so since there are less than 90 days of his or her term."

Even Barbers Chair Ana Match, a retired Supreme Court associate justice, said that Ms. Arroyo should not appoint a successor in Puno, for it would be construed as a "midnight appointment."

Against national interest

Malacañang has asserted that leaving the post vacant would go against the national interest, and argued that the 90-day constitutional ban applied only to the appointment of officials to the executive branch.

Past procedure

Puno, along with other justices, was in Malacañang to witness the oath-taking of ten executive justices and the signing of Republic Act No. 9946 granting additional retirement benefits.

Puno also pointed out that the JBC, of which he is the ex-officio chair, nominates individuals for the position of Chief Justice, as had happened in his case.

"The procedure that has been followed is for the JBC to nominate the candidates for the position not only of associate justices but also of the Chief Justice. That's the process in my case. So, I don't see any reason why there will be a deviation in the practice," he said.

The JBC is required to submit its short list of nominees before vacancies, Puno said.

Ermita's opinion

Senior President Jose Pepe Diokno, a lawyer, said on Tuesday that the President could bypass the JBC in naming a new Chief Justice.

This could be done, Diokno said, after the position's chief has been vacated by Puno in May on reaching the mandatory retirement age of 70.

Diokno said the head of the high tribunal could be chosen by the President from among the 14 members of the Supreme Court, without any need for a recommendation from the JBC.

"Only the President can make that appointment, but they can choose someone who can sign all consecutive matters," he said.

Ermita echoes Enrile

In a Malacañang briefing in the afternoon, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita echoed Enrile's position that Mr. Arroyo could bypass the JBC on the choice of a new Chief Justice.

Quoting Article 8, Section 4 of the Constitution, Ermita said that any vacancy in the high tribunal should be filled within 90 days from the occurrence of such a vacancy.

However, Cabinet Secretary Jill Bonoan Bello III said the other day that the President could not name the next Chief Justice without a list of nominees from the JBC.

No leadership vacuum

There will be no leadership vacuum in the judiciary even if Puno retires and his replacement is named only after the new President takes office on June 30, according to the Philippine Bar Association (PBA).

The oldest group of lawyers in the country, thus, objected to the proposal that the JBC submit to Ms. Arroyo a list of nominees for Puno's replacement months before the mandatory retirement.

Mr. Arroyo is supposedly barred by the Constitution from making appointments two months before the presidential election. The last exam in March 31, or three months before the term down.

An advanced appointment process, the PBA said, would violate Section 4 and 9, Article 8 of the Constitution. The provisions allow the President to fill up a vacancy in the Supreme Court only when one actually exists.

'Don't be a tool'

In a letter signed by its president, former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, the PBA said the JBC "should not allow itself to be used as a tool to further unlawful goals."

The group said that when then Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan resigned to run for vice president in 1992, the JBC did not immediately send its nominations, and the late Andres Narvasa served then as acting Chief Justice.

Quezon City Rep. Marian Sarmiento, the chair of the House committee on justice and the chamber's representative to the JBC, has proposed that the JBC start the nomination process for Puno's replacement.

Sarmiento raised the possibility of a vacuum in the leadership of the judiciary as Mr. Arroyo would already be barred from making appointments two months before the elections.

Carpio

"This is false since Section 11 of the Judiciary Act of 1948 provides that in case of a vacancy in the office of the Chief Justice, the duties and powers of his office shall devolve upon the senior associate justice who is first in precedence," the PBA said.

Furthermore, the 1987 constitutional debates show such a succession in the office of the Chief Justice has been recognized as legitimate," it added.

The PBA cited the suggestion in the cultural following the recent retirements in 2009 in Associate Justice Antonio Carpio.

Carpio is one of the founders of the law firm Villaraza, Cruz, Marcelo and Angeles, of which Marcelo is an executive.

The PBA said the JBC in 1990 nominated then President Fidel Ramos, who said the council in a letter dated May 4, 1990, that it submit nominations for the post vacated by the then recently retired Associate Justice Ricardo Francisco.

Nervous letter to Ramos

"But Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, who then headed the JBC, wrote him that the council would only convene after the elections, as the Constitution prohibits the President from making appointments two months before the elections," the PBA said.

The PBA said Drilon's proposal was an "attempt to undermine the institutions of the republic to perpetuate the incumbent President in power and insulate her from having to answer the charges against her and her administration, at the expense of judicial independence."

PHILIPPINE BAR ASSOCIATION

The Philippine Bar Association, the oldest voluntary national organization of lawyers throughout the Philippines dedicated to upholding the Rule of Law, decried the present attempts to compel the Judicial and Bar Council to prematurely submit a list of nominees to the President for the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in blatant violation of the Constitution.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE JUDICIAL BAR COUNCIL

Gentlemen:

The Philippine Bar Association raises its vehement opposition and strong objections to the brazen, not to mention unconstitutional, attempt being made by one of the Palace's staunch allies to the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to prematurely compel it to submit a list of nominees for the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to the incumbent President.

Judicial independence, the very sustaine of the JBC, is now under threat by the eleventh (11th) hour proposal of Rep. Matias V. Defensor, Jr., a leading member of the Administration party, in his letter to the JBC dated 23 December 2009 in his letter, Rep. Defensor states that the JBC submit a list of three (3) nominees for the position of Chief Justice to the incumbent President more than a quarter than not safe in the position.

Action by the JBC on the proposal by Rep. Defensor would undoubtedly result in an unconstitutional act.

Section 4(1) and 9, Article VIII of the Constitution allows the President to exercise the power of filling positions in the Supreme Court only when a vacancy actually exists. For the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, no vacancy will arise until 17 May 2010 when Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno reaches the mandatory retirement age.

Further, when 17 May 2010 is reached, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo will already be prohibited by the Constitution from appointing a replacement to the position of Chief Justice because of the Election Ban Rule.

The Election Ban Rule found in Section 15, Article VII of the Constitution absolutely prohibits the President from appointing any person, other than temporary appointments in executive positions, two months before the next Presidential elections and until the end of her term. This Rule was included in the Constitution to prevent midnight appointments by an outgoing President, who becomes a lame duck administration upon voting ends, grasping the peaceful and orderly transfer of power after the elections. Such appointments include appointments to the judiciary as reiterated by the Supreme Court in its En Banc Resolution dated March 20, 1998, 288 SCRA 408 (1998) in which Chief Justice Puno voted for the prohibition of the illegal appointments." This ban on Presidential appointments by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo begins on 8 March 2010 and unquestionably covers the period of 17 May 2010 when the vacancy in the position of Chief Justice will exist.

Thus, for the JBC to begin, at this time, the preparation of a list of three (3) nominees in order for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to appoint a Chief Justice would be an exercise in futility, not to mention unconstitutional. Such action by the JBC would allow the President to make an appointment when no vacancy exists and allow her to blatantly circumvent the Election Ban Rule provided under the Constitution.

Further, the factual and legal underpinnings of Rep. Defensor's letter are unfounded and downright wrong.

Rep. Defensor first states that there will be a vacuum when Chief Justice Puno retires on 17 May 2010. This is false since Section 12 of the Judiciary Act of 1948 (Republic Act No. 296) provides that in case of a vacancy in the office of the Chief Justice, the duties and powers of his office shall devolve upon the Associate Justice who is first in precedence." Furthermore, the 1987 Constitutional debates show such a succession in the office of the Chief Justice has been recognized as legitimate. The Supreme Court is replete with instances where the most senior Associate Justice takes over as acting Chief Justice for the duration of the vacancy and during time of the Chief Justice's inability to perform his functions.

Here, Rep. Defensor claims that the Constitution provides that, "at all times the Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and fourteen Associate Justices." Contrary to his claim, however, the Constitution, in Section 9(3), Article VIII does not provide for the term "at all times". Vacancies in the Supreme Court are a common occurrence and the Supreme Court continues to function even with such vacancies. In fact, just recently, there were simultaneously two vacancies in the Supreme Court, yet the Supreme Court continued to decide cases, including constitutional cases, with only thirteen sitting Justices.

Lastly, Rep. Defensor also implies that only a permanent Chief Justice can certify decisions of the Supreme Court. This is false. Whenever the Chief Justice is absent or on leave, the most senior Associate Justice becomes the acting Chief Justice and certifies all decisions. This has been the practice under the 1935, 1973 and present 1987 Constitutions.

Rep. Defensor's proposal to hasten the nomination of the new Chief Justice is contravention of the Constitution and jurisprudential tenets can easily be interpreted as an attempt to undermine the institutions of the Republic to perpetuate the incumbent President in power and insulate her from having to answer the charges against her and her administration, at the expense of judicial independence.

The JBC should not allow itself to be used as a tool to further unlawful goals. Its duty to uphold the independence of the judiciary would have to rest by a mere refusal to perform the acts urged by Rep. Defensor. Such a refusal will further the cause of preventing the politicizing of the judiciary as well as avoid the scourge that unconstitutional acts will never be tolerated by the JBC.

In fact, history has shown that when faced with similar scenarios, the JBC has refused to bow to such unlawful proposals. President Ramos also pressed the JBC in a letter dated May 4, 1990 to submit their nominations on the case caused by Supreme Court Justice Ricardo Francisco, in observance of the Constitutional requirement that appointments to the judiciary must be made within 90 days upon the occurrence of the vacancy. But Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, who then headed the JBC, wrote him that the Council would only convene after the elections, as the Constitution prohibits the President from making appointments two months before the elections.

Also, when then Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan resigned to run for the vice-presidency in 1992, the JBC did not immediately send its nominations, and Justice Narvasa served then as acting chief Justice.

Lastly, we call upon Chief Justice Puno to exercise his leadership in this issue and follow through with his recent fiery campaign to denounce dabbling by its our society, especially those structures that promote, breed and spawn corruption. Consistent with his recent fiery campaign, even if he was appointed Chief Justice by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, he is expected to be the first to uphold the independence of the judiciary and promote the Rule of Law.

Respectfully yours,

PHILIPPINE BAR ASSOCIATION
By: (SD) ATTY. SIMEON V. MARCELO
President

Statement taken in the letter dated 23 January 2009 sent by the Philippine Bar Association to the Judicial and Bar Council.
"Section 9 (3) x x x Any vacancy shall be filled within ninety days from the occurrence thereof."
"Section 15 x x x The Members of the Supreme Court x x x shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the Judicial and Bar Council for every vacancy."
Aytona vs. Castillo, G.R. No. L-4923 (1962)
"The Court's view is that during the period stated in Section 15, Article VII of the Constitution — "three months immediately before the next presidential election and up to the end of his term" — the President is neither required to make appointments in the courts nor allowed to do so."
"Section 9, 1935 or 1973 Cons. — in case of a vacancy in the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or of his inability to perform the duties and powers of his office, they shall devolve upon the Associate Justice who is first in precedence, until such disability is removed, or another Chief Justice is appointed and duly qualified. This provision shall apply in every instance Associate Justice succeeds to the office of Chief Justice."
"Rep. Golez Interview. There is no need under the law, Whenever the Chief Justice is absent or the position is vacant, the senior Associate Justice will perform the duties."
Atty. Pio Ma. Korte, Administrator of Constitutional Convention, Constitutional Commission of 1986, Records, Vol. II, pp. 1040.
The Philippine Star, 13 January 1998, "JBC Chief to Meet Ramos Request to Vote Early"

No need to be alarmed; there's enough rice – Yap

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECretary Arthur Yap yesterday assured the public that the country has a sufficient supply of rice and that the government has more than enough of the staple to stabilize any unwarranted spike in the price.

"There is no reason for alarm because the government has sufficient stocks to intervene in the market to cushion any increase in the prices of commercial stocks," Yap said.

He said the National Food Authority alone has a safe inventory level of 600,000 metric tons (MTs), enough to last for 20 days at a daily consumption rate of 26,300 metric tons.

In the same vein, the country's total rice inventory is estimated to last for 77 days, with commercial rice stocks placed at 900,000 MT and household stocks at 1,350,000 MT, Yap said.

According to NFA administrator Jesup P. Navarro, government stocks are expected to further increase with the arrival of some 2 million MT of imported rice, which were contracted for last year. Delivery of these stocks will begin this month and last until May.

The NFA will also be embarking on a massive buying of domestic palay, starting in February when the summer crop harvest begins, Navarro added.

He said the NFA has already begun increasing the volume of low-priced rice it sells to the public to help stabilize prices.

NFA rice outlets are to be sold at P25 a kilogram nationwide, and can be bought in accredited rice outlets like the Bigasan in Batangas and Bantayan Bagsakan, among others.

Poor Filipinos with family access cards issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development are able to buy 50K rice at a subsidized price of P18.25 a kilogram from Tiendesitas Rice outlets.

Meanwhile, Yap has ordered the NBI to investigate reports that rice is being sold at an inflated price in some markets in Metro Manila and other urbanized areas.

He directed farmers to send monitoring teams to check on price and supply movements nationwide to assure any artificial shortages and persons concerned are not violating the rice trading rules.

He warned rice traders against overpricing saying that they could have their licenses revoked if they are found violating the rice trading rules.

TOURS more than just destinations
All Meals & Fully Escorted Tours
CUBA • LIBRA & The AMERICAS
BALTIC & BALKANS
SOUTH AMERICA
3 Great Promos
SPAIN & PORTUGAL
GREECE & TURKEY
DUBAI
TRAVELINERS

ATTENTION!!!
WIN THIS BATTLE AGAINST ERECTILE PROBLEM
HERCS
EXPECT THE OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Record Bank
"Your IDEA to a better Business"
CALL NOW! Tels.: 819-1040/47-48
+813-1934/35-810-3983/+818-0919

CITYLAND
We commit, we deliver.
NEW
MAKATI EXECUTIVE TOWER IV
P 10,978 monthly
813-2222 567-3333
687-3333 242-1313
www.CITYLAND.net
SITE

Most Complete Line of Cleaning Equipment
Commander P3V
P3,700
P39,500
CLEANEX COMMERCIAL INC.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines
Episcopal Commission on the Laity
SANGGUNIANG LAIKO NG PILIPINAS
invites you to

"Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap. Talks to the Laity"

TOPICS:
"Clergy and Laity Relationship"
"Marriage and Family According to the Bible"

Faithfulness of Christ. Faithfulness of the Priest. Faithfulness of the Laity

General Objective:
For the laity to co-journey with the priests during the National Retreat for Priests on the occasion of the Year for the Priests and the Year of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

A Franciscan Capuchin Priest
A theologian and a preacher to the Papal Household.
As preacher to the Papal Household, he delivered a weekly meditation, during Advent and Lent, in the presence of the Holy Father, the cardinals, and bishops of the Roman Curia and the general superiors of religious orders.
He also gives retreats and formation sessions to lay people.

ARANETA COLISEUM, CUBAO, QUEZON CITY
JANUARY 28, 2010 (8 A.M. TO 5 P.M.)
FREE ADMISSION

Secretariat:
SANGGUNIANG LAIKO NG PILIPINAS
Laiko Bldg., 372 Cabildo St., Intramuros, Manila
Tel. 527-6368 • Fax: 527-3104
Mobile: 0919-8634218
Email: laiko_phils@yahoo.com.ph

7.0-magnitude temblor another blow to the poorest nation in the Americas

THE PRESIDENTIAL Palace was destroyed in Tuesday's earthquake. At left is the photo of the Presidential Palace before it collapsed sometime

THE EARTHQUAKE THAT UNLEASHED Haiti into darkness is another blow to a nation that has seen more than its share of misery.

Endemic instability, enormous disasters, more than 30 coups and a seemingly endless series of hurricanes and other natural disasters have churned a seamless story over Haiti's tumultuous 206-year history, leaving it the Americas' poorest country and utterly dependent on foreign aid.

Add to that Tuesday's 7.0-magnitude quake. Initial reports on its destruction are frighteningly vague.

The quake occurred along a fault line believed responsible for seven large quakes between 1618 and 2000, said Harley Seay of the US-designated Survey in Golden, Colorado.

According to Associated Press video, the 2010 quake struck Port-au-Prince and may have produced aftershocks.

The largest recorded earthquake in modern times on the island of Hispaniola was an 8.1 magnitude temblor that produced a tsunami and killed 1,790 people in 1946. Centered in the Dominican Republic, it extended into Haiti.

1st successful slave revolt

Haiti was born in 1804, after the world's first successful slave rebellion. French troops surrendered to forces led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines. But the economy suffered as drove Haiti into a paralyzing dependency from which it has yet to recover.

Political turmoil prompted US Marines to occupy Haiti from 1915 to 1934. In 1937, some 18,000 Haitians were massacred along the Dominican border on the orders of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo.

Rise of the Duvaliers

In 1957, Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier rose to power, launching a 29-year dynasty of terror. Tens of thousands were killed under Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier.

It wasn't until 1990 that Haiti had its first democratically elected president—Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a slum priest who inspired the movement that brought poor majority Aristide was overthrown in 1991, and Haitians took to the seas by the thousands in a desperate exodus to Florida.

US President Bill Clinton sent 20,000 American troops to Haiti in 1994 to restore Aristide, who was reelected in 2000.

Revolt in 2004

Aristide's initial promise soon flickered. Accusations that his party rigged legislative elections, pocketed millions of dollars in foreign aid and sent gangsters to attack opponents produced a bloody rebellion that ousted him in 2004.

Two years ago, President Rene Preval implored the world to commit to long-term solutions for his nation, saying a "paradigm of charity" would "re-establish the powers of disaster."

"Once this first wave of humanitarian compassion is exhausted, we will be left, as always, truly alone, in luxurious catastrophes and un-notated, as if in a ritual, the same exercises of mobilization," Preval declared.

The same could be said today. AP

Earthquake shatters Haiti, strongest in 200 yrs

From page A1

lding buildings choked Port-au-Prince for hours.

The United States and other nations began organizing aid efforts, alerting search teams and gathering supplies that will be badly needed in Haiti, the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. International aid groups, including the Red Cross, announced plans for major relief operations.

"Haiti has moved to center of the world's thoughts and the world's compassion," said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

Associated Press journalists based in Port-au-Prince found the damage staggering even for a country long accustomed to tragedy and disaster.

Ringing hymns

Aftershocks rattled the city as stunned survivors dazed about out of debris, wailing, frantic people searched for loved ones building bands. Thousands gathered in public squares long after nightfall, singing hymns.

People pulled bodies from collapsed homes, covering them with sheets by the side of the road. Somewhere lifted the sheets to see if a loved one was underneath.

It was clear lots of thousands lost their homes and many perished in collapsed buildings that were flimsy and dangerous even under the best circumstances.

"The hospitals cannot handle all those victims," Dr. Louis-Gerard Gilles, a former senator, said as he helped carry one. "Haiti needs prayer. We all need to pray together."

An Associated Press videographer saw a stretcher hospital where people screamed for help in Petionville, a hillside Port-au-Prince district that is home to many diplomats and wealthy Haitians as well as the poor.

At a destroyed four-story apartment building, a girl of about 14 stood atop a car, trying to pour muddy water between two pulled out a bed sticking from rubble. She said her family was inside.

UN peacekeepers

UN peacekeepers, many of whom have been based since the tainted front and efforts by their own tragedy. Many spent the night hunting for survivors in the ruins of their headquarters.

At least 11 peacekeepers from Brazil, Jordan and Chile were confirmed killed, although officials have said the information was not confirmed.

UN peacekeeping chief Alain Le Roy said late Tuesday that the missing included mission chief Hedi Annabi of Tunisia, who was in the building when the quake struck. Some 9,000 peacekeepers have been in Haiti since 2004.

Much of the National Palace patrolled on itself, but Haiti's Ambassador to Mexico Gabriel Fortune Gelin said President Rene Preval and his wife survived the earthquake. He had no details.

The International Red Cross says 3 million people may have been affected but that it would take a day or two for a clear picture.

Strongest since 1770

The quake struck at 4:53 p.m., centered 15 kilometers (9 miles) of Port-au-Prince at a depth of only 8 km, the US Geological Survey said. Geophysicist Erwin Hinzen called it the strongest earthquake since 1770 in what is now Haiti.

Most of Haiti's 9 million people are desperately poor and after years of political instability, the country has no real construction standards. At November 2008, following the collapse of a school in Petionville, the mayor of Port-au-Prince estimated about 80 percent of buildings were shoddily built and unsafe in normal tremor strength.

With electricity knocked out in many places and phone service erratic, it was impossible for Haitians or foreign officials to get full details of the devastation.

"Everybody is just totally, totally freaked out and shaken," said Henry Bahrs, a US Department of Agriculture official visiting from an Prince. "The sky is just gray with dust."

International aid

US President Barack Obama offered prayers for the people of Haiti and said the United States stood ready to help. US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the US government was offering full assistance—civilian and military—and a national organization of registered nurses called for nurse volunteers to provide care in Haiti.

Venezuela's government said it would send a military plane with canned foods, medicines and drinking water, and provide 10 rescue workers. Mexico, which suffered an earthquake in 1985 that killed some 10,000 people, planned to send doctors, search and rescue dogs and infrastructure damage experts.

Italy said it was sending a C-130 cargo plane Wednesday with a field hospital and emergency medical personnel as well as a team to assess aid needs. France said 40 cleaning specialists, with six police dogs, and two doctors and two nurses were leaving.

Life is so fragile

Edwidge Danticat, an award-winning Haitian author, said other nations unable to connect relatives in Haiti.

Danticat ran with family and friends at her home in Miami, looking for news on the Internet and watching TV news reports.

"You want to go there, but you just have to wait," she said. "Life is already so fragile in Haiti, and to have this on such a massive scale, it's unimaginable how the country will be able to recover from it." *Reports from AP and AFP*

All 179 RP troops safe, says military

From page A1

affairs had said earlier it was concerned for the safety of 179 Filipino military and police peacekeepers in Haiti after failing to reach them following the 7.0-magnitude quake in the impoverished Caribbean nation.

The Filipino peacekeepers are now taking part in efforts to restore UN staff after a massive quake destroyed the UN mission headquarters in the capital, a foreign affairs official said yesterday.

First on the scene

"We were told by the UN they were first on scene of the collapsed UN headquarters," Hilmo Cain, spokesperson for the Philippine mission to the United Nations, told reporters from New York.

Cain said the Filipino peacekeepers were based in a building across the street from the headquarters of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (Minustah), which was reduced to rubble.

Alain Leroy, the head of the UN department of peacekeeping operations, which oversees the world body's various missions around the world, said a large number of personnel remain unaccounted for in Haiti.

They are assigned to guard the UN headquarters above 130 yards down the road, he added.

Fate of 447 others unknown

The UN said that the building collapsed and that a large number of staff were unaccounted for.

The foreign ministry said a number of nationals remained unaccounted for.

"The Department of Foreign Affairs is deeply concerned over the conditions of Filipinos in Haiti," it said in a statement.

Reuters said that Degay called his wife in the Philippines three hours after the temblor and told her that his men were in some of the collapsed buildings in Haiti.

"They are trying now in recovery those personnel from the ruins of some of the buildings that collapsed," Reuters said.

Downed communications line

Degay in his brief call to his wife, said power and communication services were difficult as telephone lines were toppled and the Internet cables were out.

The phone call came through at about 8:40 a.m. (Philippine time) yesterday or about 8 p.m. Tuesday in Haiti.

It was the only communication that the Armed forces of the Philippines had received so far from Degay, according to Reuters.

The AFP dispatched the soldiers to Haiti in August 2009 as part of its commitment to the United Nation's global peace and nation building efforts. The group was to complete its six-month mission and return home next month.

Some of the 15 member Philippine National Police team in Haiti was injured, said Chief Supt. Leonardo Espina. PNP spokesperson.

"As of this time, the report we received indicated all our PNP troops in Haiti are safe," he said. With reports from Gemma Bagayaua and AFP

Bro. Eddie tells Noynoy: 'Diyos at Bayan,' that's my slogan

From page A1

ence meeting on Aquino's latest campaign and to exhibit the latter involved party and partymate duty in his vow to fight poverty and resist temptation of corruption once in power.

"Nakipagtuos ako sa Diyos at sa bayan, hindi ako magpatalo sa 10 presidente before God and country, I will never recall," Aquino, who had consistently topped the surveys of presidential contenders, declared to the air.

Title of talk show

In enough to underscore his stake on the slogan, Villanueva yesterday pounced on that "Diyos at Bayan" was the title of his longrunning radio show produced by his own BOC Broadcasting Network and which aired on GTV 11, GMA 7 and UHF Channel 31.

"We are happy that Noynoy is convinced in the adversary of Bayan ang Pilipinas is just God and country. First before oneself," he said in a statement.

Sought for comment, Liberal Party campaign manager Florencio Abad said Aquino did not see recently install the slogan but also so embodied it.

"The Noynoy this is not a new slogan that he is picking up from Brother Eddie. It has been his life, the embodiment of his belief and core," Abad said. "His many sermon slogans until they are lived out. Soy has done it."

Anybody can say I love God or serve him God. One can be religious without God, but a person who upholds his word through justice and fairness is proof of genuine fear. Soy has shown his fear of God not in slogans but by his dealings with people and per-

sonalities," he stressed.

The preacher-turned-politician stressed that his own campaign was also centered on the theme of serving God and country.

The 60-year-old Villanueva said Aquino's ad showed that the Liberal Party standard bearer had been supporting his advocacy all along.

"Noynoy must have felt that putting God in everything we do is really the way to go. He at Negros Filipino have always believed that," said the religious leader who also founded the Jesus is Lord Church.

Christianity in governance

"Without genuine love for God and for country it is very easy for a leader to succumb to his or her own selfish interests and disregard the welfare of the Filipino people. If you are a true follower of Christ, as Christians are supposed to be, then you cannot in conscience even think of stealing yourself through corruption," Villanueva added.

"We are a predominantly Christian nation. Yet where is our love for God? It is just reflected as all in the way that many of our leaders are running the affairs of our government," he said.

Villanueva is making a second bid for Malacañang after a denial drawing in the 2004 elections, where he finished last among the five candidates.

Among opponents in this year's race, Villanueva has been trailing in the surveys conducted by the Social Weather Stations. *With a report from* Bill C. Cabanatan Jr.

Across the NATION

Farmers start 10-day march to Palace

Negros execs seek cloud seeding as drought felt

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE SOUTHern part of Negros Occidental will require cloud seeding immediately because the desert-and-hot-dusted drying up and the supply of water has become scarce, provincial agriculturist Ignacio Tabiano said on Tuesday.

Tabiano said his office has been monitoring the situation in southern Negros because the supply of water in the area was dropping fast.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), in its El Niño Advisory No. 3 Tuesday said Western Visayas would suffer more from lack of rainfall.

Tabiano said he has proposed nearly 40 cloud seeding operations for the province.

Funds ready

Gov. Isidro Zayas said he instructed Tabiano to coordinate with the appropriate agencies for the cloud seeding programs, which the provincial government has already allocated funds for.

"If the major federations put up counterpart funds for the cloud seeding, we will also welcome that," Zayas said on Tuesday.

Tabiano said his office has asked the Philippine Air Force for permission to use its aircraft for cloud seeding but they may also use private aircraft for the purpose.

The 40 cloud seeding operations would require 20 flying hours and cost about P1 million.

Plant vegetables

The provincial agriculture office urged farmers in areas facing water shortage to plant crops that mature quickly, like vegetables.

Pagasa said the current El Niño episode would lead to an early long, hot summer.

Pagasa said Cagayan was already in drought condition as it suffered from lack of rainfall from August to December last year.

Although Pagasa has predicted drought, it also forecast stronger typhoons hitting the Philippines this year.

Court extends TRO vs Capiz PNP reshuffle

By Felipa V. Calleo
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—THE REGIONAL Trial Court (RTC) here extended its 20-day restraining order (TRO) on the provincial government of Capiz, which sought to keep its police director.

Capiz Gov. Victor Tanco earlier petitioned the court to prevent the relief of outgoing Capiz provincial police Chief Supt. Josephus Sagun and the assumption of Sr. Supt. Petronel Gallogo as the new provincial police chief.

Angun was supposed to have seen his post to Gallogo last November but the PNP decided to convert it because of the TRO that was in effect until Monday.

In his two-page decision issued Tuesday, RTC Executive Judge Ricardo Contreras of Branch 17 said that based on the affidavit and testimony of the petitioner, "there exists extreme urgency in the subject matter of the petition."

There could be replacement of dengue-stricken execution rules.

Contreras directed Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and the Philippine National Police to stop implementing the relief order of Angun.

CEBU FEAST
School children take part in dancing contests at the Cebu City Sports Center during events leading to the start of Sinulog, the city's biggest feast in honor of the Sto. Niño.
JOAN BONDOC/AFP

BACOLOD CITY—FARMERS BELONGING TO THE Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) yesterday started a 10-day caravan that will connect them with their colleagues in Visayas and Luzon for a long march to Malacañang to dramatize their call for land and justice.

Danilo Ramos, KMP secretary general, said aside from expressing their disgust over the failure of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), the "deceptive" measure of its extension and the worsening conditions of farmers all over the country, the march will also mark the 23rd year of the Mendiola massacre.

At least 13 farmers were killed when they were shot at by authorities as they were demanding land reform near Malacañang in 1987. Fifty-one others were injured in the attack.

"Farmers also have the issues of injustice and the culture of impunity in the country," he said.

Death toll

Ramos said a total of 581 farmers have fallen victims to extrajudicial killings, or more than half of those on a mass said victims mentioned by the human rights group Karapatan since President Macapagal-Arroyo took power in 2001.

Of the 581 persons killed, 158 were KMP members and leaders, Ramos said, adding that 128 peasants have also disappeared under the Aquino administration.

Roaring torches and placards and calling for the stepping of the law that extended CARP, farmers marched toward the Quirino office of Speaker Prospero Nograles, a close Arroyo ally who has been initiating moves for Charter change in Congress, on Wednesday.

Long walk

The protesting farmers were to leave for Roxas City yesterday to meet those coming from Cagayan de Oro.

From Roxas, they will proceed to Iloilo City and will take the barge to Calbayog in Leyte, where they will ba'lae the route to Catarman, Samar, Sorsogon, Legaspi, Naga, Lucena, Calamba all the way to the Recto in Cherch in Parañaque City, Ramos said.

From the North, another group of farmers will start off from Tarlac city and will follow the route to Clark, Angeles, San Fernando, Meycauayan and Monumento in Caloocan.

Ramos said over 7,000 farmers "bona ad" were to converge were expected to gather in Quezon City on Jan. 21 to prepare for the long march to Malacañang.

"Landlessness has be worsened and the institutionalized killing of farmers has gone unabated since the years," said Pedro Arnaldo Klinsing Magbubukid ng Pilipinas Southern Mindanao chair, in a phone interview.

First for Mendiola

Arnaldo said the long march—dubbed "Lakbayan para sa Lupa at Katarungan"—is the first simultaneous long march staged by farmers in memory of those who were killed in the Mendiola massacre.

"No entire generation today has ever set foot on it and many could have already forgotten Mendiola massacre, but for those who have become widows and orphans, certainly they would not settle for just that. They seek retribution for the lives taken that have never been brought back," he said. *Gerry Albarillo, Laurice and Carla Agamon, Inquirer Mindanao*

Church group sees poll fundraising in ₱30-M Aurora dredging

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO... Officials of Gangsan, Aurora, on Tuesday agreed to investigate a P30-million flood control project that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is implementing on suspicion that it is being used to raise campaign funds.

Leaders and members of the Nuestra Señora dela Salvacion Parish, in a petition submitted to the Congressional Secretariat, said they find the project "questionable, dubious and anomalous."

The program of work that the DPWH and the contractor submitted to the municipal planning and development council was "unsigned, undated and was not approved" by Mayor Reynaldo Sheng.

The project, which began on Dec. 5 and comprised mainly of dredging work on the Ditalapan River, could deprive about 500 farmers of rice lands for refugees of Dilter, Barrow and Calingan of water. These are mainly in the planned Aurora Special Economic Zone Authority.

"Some of the water pumps are already drained ... Some farmers said [they] have to use enough water to supply their farms. If this a happening already how much more if we lose the El Niño phenomenon," said the petitioners, led by their parish priest, Fr. Jonas Bilabas.

In a letter to the DPWH Aurora district office, Sheng said: "I interpose an objection on the commencement of the project for reasons that its program of work [is] undated and unsigned and that it was started without any knowledge."

"It looks like they're on campaign fundraising. This is campaigning, they do the work hap-hazardly," Sheng said in a telephone interview.

He did not say, however, who his supports are for before the supposed election-hastening.

DPWH district engineer Elmer Dalduby confirmed that the project is being done by the agency.

"The funds came from the general appropriation," he said.

But Gov. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo said she was uncertain if the project is being funded by the provincial government.

Dalduby said the project was bid out in December and was won by E and P Construction. *Rappler's Dreyas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Court extends TRO vs Capiz PNP reshuffle

By Felipa V. Calleo
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—THE REGIONAL Trial Court (RTC) here extended its 20-day restraining order (TRO) on the provincial government of Capiz, which sought to keep its police director.

Capiz Gov. Victor Tanco earlier petitioned the court to prevent the relief of outgoing Capiz provincial police Chief Supt. Josephus Sagun and the assumption of Sr. Supt. Petronel Gallogo as the new provincial police chief.

Angun was supposed to have seen his post to Gallogo last November but the PNP decided to convert it because of the TRO that was in effect until Monday.

In his two-page decision issued Tuesday, RTC Executive Judge Ricardo Contreras of Branch 17 said that based on the affidavit and testimony of the petitioner, "there exists extreme urgency in the subject matter of the petition."

There could be replacement of dengue-stricken execution rules.

Contreras directed Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and the Philippine National Police to stop implementing the relief order of Angun.

Life returning to normal for Laguna flood victims

BAY, LAGUNA—SCHOOLS and covered courts here are finally empty of evacuees as victims of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" are starting to rebuild their homes.

The only evacuees left—132 families—are staying in temporary shelters donated by the local government, while others have rented apartments or are staying with relatives, said municipal social welfare officer Lucille de Leon.

She said the only remaining evacuees were those whose homes were destroyed and have nowhere else to go.

In San Pedro, disease outbreak day care centers that were engaged for several months were reopened so as to ease the month.

Of the 33 day care centers there, at least five continued to operate, said Benjamin Mantilla Jr., a care worker at the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office.

Although those were far from flood-stricken villages, day care center workers had to take a leave from teaching to ease evacuation centers.

Elinda Tabino, 40, said she came back to the day care center in Barangay Cuyab on Nov. 22, and was surprised that there were fewer pupils. "From 47 [pupils], only 17 came back. I feel 30 of them," she said.

She said families had already moved out of the village.

Edgardo Lacuesta, general manager of the Laguna Lake Development Authority, on Tuesday said water level in Laguna Lake receded from 12.8 meters to 12.25 meters.

Water level in San Pedro, Binan and Cabuyao, however, haven't receded, Mendoza said.

San Pedro municipal officials said only 605 families remained in evacuation centers, from 4,938 families during the height of the typhoons.

Mendoza said the remaining evacuees were those whose homes were damaged in the floods.

In June 2010 families were transferred to a government relocation site in Barangay San Vicente. *Charlie Cabling-Pia Arcibal-It and Mariane Cleon, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

BOATS became the main mode of transportation in some villages in Calamba City due to the onslaught of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" last year.
CHARLIE CABLING-PIA ARCIBAL/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jim Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Florante C. Solmerano

Struggling artists finally find their space

By Marivic Cinco
Inquirer Visayas

FROM THEIR FRIENDS' homes in Manila's streets, these young, struggling artists have finally landed on a place of their own to showcase their craft at their liberty.

"Espasyo" (Space) is how they call a 50-square-meter venue in an obscure spot in the newly created first-class city of Tagaytay in Cavite, which they have turned into an amateur artist-run gallery.

"It's hard to propose artworks to galleries in Manila because they screen them out, depending on the [style] the gallery caters to," said metal sculptor Little Salvador, 43, who accomplished Espasyo.

"There are lots of good artists outside that 'circle' of those who already have a name and are established. And it's hard to penetrate that artists' community, especially when you are starting. At least [through Espasyo], they are recognized little by little," he said.

YOUNG artenthusiasts admire one of the paintings on display at the Espasyo art gallery in Diamond Hotel, Cavite.

Mobile art gallery

In the early '90s, Salvador and fellow artists used to install art pieces and transferred from one place to another in their friends' homes in Manila and Pasay City.

Later in the decade, they stood several times to open a mobile art gallery.

The first one, Salvador remembered, was made of scrap materials that they turned into a pushcart the size of a jeep. They hung the paintings and sculptures, and pushed the art-on-wheels around the streets.

The second contraption was made of chicken wire the size of two plywood, which they rolled out every street show. Police would often drive them away mistaking them for protesters, if not for a signage that said "Art for Peace," Salvador said.

At night, they would sleep on the breakwater along Manila bay.

Although life seemed easy then, their "art venues" were failed attempts to market their crafts.

"It's perhaps because of the culture that Filipinos are not very much appreciative to arts yet. Although many were interested with what we did, it never went beyond that," Salvador said.

When his family moved from Manila to Cavite, Salvador said he finally found the space to house his and other artists' works.

Dolmats

In June, Salvador opened Espasyo. The place is a former boarhouse turned into a bookstore before his group rented it. The artists painted the facade with murals.

"We allotted one side of the structure for street children to paint it. Instead of them vandalizing the wall, we provided them with painting materials," said Heidi Sorino, 28, another Espasyo artist.

The group invited a hundred artists to grace the gallery's opening. Since then, many artists and art students from Rizal province and Manila have put up their exhibits there.

At least once a month, Espasyo holds the Boutique Art Forum, an open art exhibit for young artists and art students.

"It is Justisay Empezamos! to create you are crawling into to Espasyo," James said. She said art films were shown and underscore bands performed during the night's event.

The artists also formed a loose group of local colleagues that they call Sinagbilanca.

Espasyo is being maintained through donations from participating artists.

"It's just so spontaneous that I am sometimes surprised how we are able to survive. The next thing you know is there is enough money to pay the electric bills," Salvador said.

Six artists who exhibit their works, the gallery shoulders the materials and takes a small fee from the proceeds. Espasyo can house up to 100 pieces of 1 x 1-inch size portraits.

Salvador's wife, Mary Ann, 37, encouraged building art workshops for children during the day. Some people with mobile jobs donate part of their salary for the gallery's upkeep.

"If we don't have money, we are still happy here. If there is, we are even happier," Salvador said.

SIEMENS

CEBU DOCTORS' UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Brings world class patient care to
Visayas and Mindanao

SOMATOM Definition AS+ 128 Slice CT Scan

- **Adapts to Any Patient**
  Caters to all patients - pediatric to bariatric, without compromise.
- **Adapts for Complete Dose Protection**
  Active dose management in 100% dose of exams. Patients are assured of the highest image quality at the lowest possible dose.
- **Adapts for New Dimensions**
  Full organ coverage for both brain and body. Workflow focus on efficient delivery of acute care and oncology imaging needs.

Cebu Doctors' University Hospital
Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City
Tel No : (032) 255-5555

North General Hospital

South General Hospital

Cebu Doctors' University

Mactan Doctors' Hospital

San Carlos Doctors' Hospital

www.cebudocgroup.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The power to exempt

THE ELECTION SEASON GUN BAN WAS NEVER meant to emasculate law enforcement agencies. It was designed to reduce the possibility of election-related violence, while allowing law enforcement agencies to continue to do their job. But the power of the Commission on Elections to grant exemptions can be abused, even in the name of law enforcement.

EDITORIAL

That the Comelec deems serious about the gun ban can be gleaned from the number of arrests that have been effected since the start of the election period last Sunday. That the loopholes that make a mockery of many of our laws continue to be a problem even for the Comelec can be seen from its announcement regarding exemptions. "When we issued the certificate of authority to the AFP it says 'all units,' and Caliga is a unit of the AFP. It's now up to the AFP to police their ranks," said Commissioner Lucenito Tagle.

Actually, the additional exemption was granted to DAs, or Civilian Active Auxiliaries, the new name for the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit militias that have long been a cherished part of the national security apparatus. But new name aside, the reality remains the same: While many militia units have helped the AFP assist in security objectives, other militias have been nothing more than loyal cover for private armies. It would have been better if the Comelec had issued a piecemeal rather than a blanket authorization for the DAs. Imposing standards stricter than it had levied on the military.

It is no less true than the militias form a regular part of the Armed Forces. They are a paramilitary force, used to augment military presence or components for the AFP's absence in specific areas. If they were a regular military unit, where would this place the AFP after it was established that militiamen had formed part of the murderous force that carried out the massacre in Ampatuan, Maguindanao, last Nov. 23?

Besides, one of the key sources of the gun ban, Section 32 of Republic Act 7166, states in part: "Only regular members or officers of the Philippine National Police, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and other enforcement agencies of the Government who are duly deputized in writing by the Commission for election duty may be authorized to carry and possess firearms during the election period: Provided, That, when in the possession of firearms, the deputized law enforcement officer must be: (a) in full uniform showing clearly and legibly his name, rank and serial number which shall remain visible at all times; and (b) in the actual performance of his election duty in the specific area designated by the Commission." How many militia members can meet the first requirement of uniforms with names, rank and serial numbers?

And if CAAs are a regular unit of the AFP, where does Comelec Resolution 8741, promulgated only last week and depriving "the entire Armed Forces of the Philippines," place the militia units?

We urge the Comelec to reconsider the blanket exemption it has granted hard-to-account-for militiamen.

Another loophole concerns exemptions for bodyguards. As may be required by candidates, public officials or celebrities. Last year, Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer, who confessed he did not "believe in the concept of total gun ban," raised the example of leading icon Manny Pacquiao as a test case. Will someone like him entitled to police security? The answer, we believe, is conditional. It depends on the circumstances, on the credibility of threats or the perception of vulnerability. Given the many deadlines it is up against, and the pressure of implementing the first fully automated election in the country's history, the Comelec may wish to take the easy way out, and offer universal security of the numerous applications for exemption. But it would miss the opportunity to clamp down on election violence. It can ease some of the pressure it faces by putting the burden of proof squarely on the applicants; if the application does not prove that a real security threat exists, it must be denied, as once and with no possibility of appeal.

We can see for ourselves that the Comelec and its main deputies are serious about the gun ban. We would like to see the Comelec prove it some more by rejecting those seeking exemptions merely because they are addicted to guns.

Publisher Isaac Tanny
Editor in Chief Jose Ma. D. Nolasco
Managing Editor Joe Ma. D. Nolasco
Associate Editor Abigail G. Elagio
Assistant Editor for Operations Ronnie R. Domingo
Opinion Editor Juan L. Mercado
News Editor Antonio T. Enriquez Jr. • Chief, Page One Operations Nelly E. Pulido
Chief, News Desk Ruben R. Almonte
Business Manager Pedro Pancho Jr.
Senior Desk Editor Jose F. Sonido Jr.
Editor in Consultant Augusto Dimasuay
Chief Photographer Raul E. Dancel Jr.
Art & Design Director Lowie A. Villarin
Board of Directors Raul E. Pancho
President Alexander Poon Kwan Jr.
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Ernesto E. Rondon
Vice President for Advertising Pilar R. Gloria
Vice President for Info Tech and Business Dev. Gary G. Lim
Vice President for Finance Jose H. Nolasco
Advisor for Circulation Manuel Andrew B. Chanyungco
AVP for Marketing Jennifer S. Rondon
Designer Alfie S. Bringas Consultant Edwin R. Salvador

All rights reserved. Except as permitted by law, no copies of the Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Visas of last resort

VIEWPOINT
Juan L. Mercado

DID SIX-YEAR-OLD JESSON ABU MOTHER OF two Sesame Sophisticates "look for a bright, as she'd get a visa to stay in Israel"?

She did, insisted a faceless Interior Ministry official. Haaretz daily reported. Published in Hebrew and English, the 92-year-old newspaper is proof by the country's superiors.

"Too many Filipinos are going this road. It must stop," reporter Dana Weiler-Polak quotes from the internal memo. "They must be removed from the country."

The document describes "a trend of trying to prevent marriages between Israelis and Filipinos," the Haaretz report added.

Rajaimmen won a caregiver, one of roughly 26,000 Filipino workers in Israel. The United Arab Emirates has 520,111 OFWs, and Saudi Arabia, 1.01 million.) When Rajaimmen's employer died, she stayed.

She "met and fell in love" with Israeli Shlomo Tzuge, 67. They started the five-year process to obtain citizenship for Kapinesan. Officials recommended approval. But the lady who issued visas said no, without even meeting the couple. "We base our decisions on 'love of him,'" she wrote. "She has a way of staying in Israel legally."

Reminds one of the Jewish matchmaker Yente, in the Broadway play, "Fiddler on the Roof." Tevye sings: "Rishel, Rishel, I've made a match for you. I have, I have, I have. It's wrong. / All right, let's fix./ But he's a good match, a good match./ True? True."

Even smirked documents "do not justify 'schmaltz of this type," a ministry spokesman admitted. Yet state district court vice president Israel Gilead, in 2008, ordered the release of Rajaimmen, pending a decision.

"Ministry employees do encounter this phenomenon," the spokesman said. "Phenomenon" refers to marriages of convenience.

Some Indians and Chinese marry Filipinos to smuggle them into Israel, here. Most Filipinos are matching Tennessee, Japanese and Koreans. Wedding rings are often clues of last resort. They are "unripe bushes from grinding poverty," Newsweek noted on Jan. 8, 2008. Some admit that marrying foreigners is a ticket for possible jobs and settlement abroad, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) says.

A total of 309,745 Filipinos married foreigners within an 18-year span. Nine out of 10 (92 percent) were brides. An Asian marriage migration trend is surging, concludes an earlier Commission on Filipinos Overseas study by Maida Silencio, Myrna Bunao and demographer Socorro Jocson.

"Migration not infrequently gets a bad press," UN Development Programme's Helen Clark writes. "Negative stereotypes abound." They range from migrants "stealing jobs" to sending foreign aid out of last resort.

That's only part of the picture. True, this year's United Nations Human Development Report "challenges stereotyping," as the board exec officer did. "Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development" reveals that people on the move "reflect a more complex and highly successful reality."

IOM seeks "to rebalance perceptions that treat migrants as faceless places with strange sounding names." The number of nations states, after all, has quadrupled to almost 200. "There are more borders to cross."

In fact, only a third of migrants (75 million) head to host poor to affluent nations. Majority of the 200 million migrants move within countries, often from faltering farms to over-fished coastal villages or ill-prepared cities.

Migration supporting remains framed on remittances. Last year, OFWs fund parents, pay school bills, etc. Poorest migrants send a larger proportion of their meagre homes than rich. "People from the poorest places gain the most."

"Even if well managed, international migration does not amount to a national development strategy," the report says: migration won't shape the development prospects of an entire nation.

"Migration does complement national efforts to reduce poverty and improve human development. These efforts remain as critical as ever." Here is a point candidates in the 2010 elections here should note.

"When migrants skills complement those of local people, both groups benefit: from rising levels of technical innovation to enriched culture. But policy response—both from labor-sending to labor-receiving countries—is wanting."

"Some governments institute repressive entry regimes," the Haaretz report notes. Many fail to protect workers. Asian migrants moving in the Gulf states often pay 20 to 25 percent of what they expect to earn over years as their savings are swallowed up by fees. Corruption imposes additional costs. Private recruiters have to be closely regulated to curb fraud.

It takes political courage to institute migration reforms. There are limits to governments' ability to shape migrant patterns. Still, New Zealand instituted a seasonal employers' scheme. Sweden introduced major labor migration reforms for unseasonably newer cross cheap.

Indonesia entrusted its national agency for protection of migrant workers after the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration. "Other countries ... tried to criminalize 'paper trails' to reduce barriers to legal migration. Few succeeded... Labor remain common for receiving purposes, etc."

Significant growth and poverty national clusters for pressure to migrate to raise more. The social costs can be enormous. Of 10,243 Filipinos married to Japanese, 3,931 ended up as divorcees.

"Your loved ones is less that means? Will sit at breakfasts and/or not in years? Where you untold at a table? Made now divided by five? Instead of six, don't feed an employee," Filipino poet Nadine Ilacad wrote.

(Email: jmercado.inq@gmail.com)

Be prepared

THERE'S THE RUB
Conrado de Quiros

AND BISHOP OSCAR CRUZ SOUNDS A PAIN ring that has been on the back of the mind of many voters today. We're headed for a disaster in May. "Where are the machines?" What has already been put in motion, and on a massive scale, to read even the well-shaded ballots. "Why is it that, to date, the vendors who are supposed to train the machines are still in the dark about their task?" Why are websites being hacked with impunity of late?

Cruz cited as well the unseen things that have been happening alongside this. Despite the Maguindanao massacre, private armies continue to roam about, raping and pillaging, not entirely metaphorically. "Mindanao is already in trouble. There are indications it could become even more dangerous and explosive. With some 30 percent of the electorate coming from there, will the national election be postponed because of that? Is there a social disorder in the making?"

These are not just valid questions, these are life-and-death ones. There is every reason to fear—and be prepared for—a failure of elections scenario like May Quite incidentally, the hacking part seems true. Noyo reports having its website attacked some months ago. For at least half an hour it turned being delayed by some hackers. Imagine the mayhem they can cause the stuff? Is that toward election day, the websites of the volunteer groups for Noynoy will crash from being glutted and jammed.

But, that's nothing. The most potent dangers are the ones Cruz mentions. There is a degree of sloppiness that reminds one of typical government inefficiency, or even typical Malacañang fresh-ups, and suggests systematic engineering. This is one of them. It's a recitation of Murphy's Law, which says that if anything can go wrong it will, except that this is one law that does not depend on Murphy's malfunctioning. Law deliveries, machines that don't work, ballots can't go to the Dead Sea Scrolls, no teachers and voters' education in the area system, expression infrastructure which are bound to produce ghastly ghostly voters' lists (the kind where the living are dead and the dead living)—you name it, they have it. Or they've done it.

That doesn't include the worst thing of all, which the IT community of this country has been brooding its head off about to no avail. That is that those machines, where they are delivered, could, and probably would, work perfectly as meant wrongly. Using software known only to its controllers, the machines could vary well harbor a virus like code that springs to life at a given time, in this case election day ticking off the votes for one candidate in favor of another. It's still another variation of Murphy's Law. With this regime, anything that can be used to cheat will be used.

And that still doesn't include the political environment in which these things are happening, which is patently alarming. Apart from the things Cruz mentions, there is the climate of fear, at which threatens to blow up in 1000s face, whose ring she has tried to take out with another trial, that of Ping Lacson. There's rhetoric in Insulder who has been busy trying to restore the military to defend the indefensible in the guise of fighting the enemies of freedom. There are the Arroyo-ites who are determined to get Malacañang by hook or by crook, by GMA or by MOA. If Hillary Clinton did make the best time to sign it was before GMA left.) And there's GMA herself whose whole trajectory shows someone who cannot abide with without power.

There's a bad moon rising, to quote John Fogerty. How to meet it? More than ever that is by running the spirit of Edsa, which was exhibited by the death of Cojuangco Jr. last year, into waging Edsa.

As the very least that's to out of a sense of obligation. The two Edsas will soon be upon us, events that deserve the same outpouring of passion we showed at Cory's funeral. If we can groom over the death of a loved one, we can do it all over the life of a loved one. Arguably the second Edsa produced only the life of a hated one, but that is not what we are celebrating. Dead of it being that the hated one has thus extending to her power to prevent us not just from celebrating it but from remembering it. With Edsa, I and II, we celebrate, and remember, the spirit that harks back to the days of Rizal and Bonifacio, to a spirit that says no to death and yes to life, to a spirit that says no to oppression and yes to freedom.

As the very least that's no out of a sense of desperation. The people who do not want change, or, worse, who mean to make sure it's still worse, are armed against us, ready to do battle. Or since that makes them out to the lazy or thin life, the forces that mean us harm are armed against us, ready to do battle to fight back. Never underestimate the fortification of vested rule.

The only way to stop them or to fan the fires of the Edsa spirit that were rekindled last year, the kind that made the country's fortune in fury at the rape of Cory's death, and have its head in grief at the epic loss of its icon, or her Filipino incarnation, the kind that made the country recall at what was taken us, some us, and demand justice us. The only way to stop them is to see the May elections not as ordinary elections, as a matter between candidates with differential virtues or vices, but as a flashpoint, a watershed, a line of demarcation, between what was and what can be, between the certainty of death and the possibilities of life. The only way to stop them is to put a flower at the end of the barrel of a rifle, the ruthless image of Edsa, that flower being the quality of an undefined people, made invincible by the march of history which emerge every obstacle in its path, to call the muzzles of death and devastation.

Be prepared.

The debate continues

THERE ARE A LOT OF INPUTS TO THE DEBATE on whether President Macapagal-Arroyo should appoint a new chief justice when the incumbent, Reynato Puno, retires on May 17. (Ex-deputies have also herself retire from Malacañang. A number of opposition personalities are against leaving GMA make the appointment since it is widely believed that she won't pick the most senior associate justice, Antonio Carpio, who has been a staunch opponent to her, but the next senior justice, Justice Corona, who's perceived to be close to her.

* * *

Other recommendations include this issue from the legal and "artist" standpoint. For instance, Graduate economist Dr. Rodolfo Aguino argues that for GMA to leave this function to the next administration would "not only violate the clear intention of the Constitution. It could politicize the appointment of a chief justice as it subordinate unto the need to maintain the full composition of the high court to the political preferences of the appointing power." He asserts that appointing Puno's associate justices is a given limit to a "command" from the Constitution.

On the other hand, election lawyer Romeo Macalintal, who has handled cases for GMA, argues that the President will be harder if not "out of bad justice" to at the helm between May 17 and June 30. He cites the hypothetical case of an election protest filed against the winning presidential candidate on June 30 and the 20 before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), which is composed of members of the SC. What if the PET is effectively an "acting chief justice" whose permanent appointment will depend on the winning candidate, that will be left to the next President? Under that candidate's fate? If the Constitution prohibits the appointment of an "acting Comelec chairman," Macalintal says, there is all the more reason there should be no "acting chief justice."

* * *

I can see how unfair it seems for a president with a political life of one and a half months to appoint a chief justice who would stay even beyond the 30s of the next administration. But, then again, the constitutional mandate not only to fill up the vacancy within

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cantiveros

90 days, but to protect the national interest. As Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile put it, the 14 remaining months must not be left to the "mercy" of the third and those are just too many processes in the decision-making functions of the tribunal that need the chief justice himself. One might add, especially in the context of tensions between the elections and the opening of Congress.

* * *

Former President Joseph Estrada was a bit of points when he showed up at the National Electoral Council meeting in Malacañang the other day that the first time since he was ousted in near the Palace almost nine years ago. If Estrada turned some essence in his heart, he didn't show it. He appeared ready in subordinate personal feelings for the national interest in addressing security and election concerns.

* * *

Surveys say the race between Noynoy Aquino and Manny Villar has tightened, with the latter cutting the former's lead from 19 points in 12 points in just three months. Villar's ranking jumped from 27 points in early December to 32 points at the end of last year. My son Buddy, in his Manila Times column last Monday, correctly analyzed the trajectory for Villar's rapid rise: wide name recall, political machinery he's bought, has a fantastic machinery and a huge techno-dusty and a promise of jobs that resonate with the poor. Noynoy's camp is reported to be "in protest confusion," Buddy quoted Ali Esmeralda.

Another factor is the growing perception that Noynoy is woefully ill prepared to lead this nation at this most critical juncture. A pundit reads Noynoy's knee-jerk jab at the poll surveys indicating he has two point rating decline as emotional nonsense. The morning, three presidential candidates will face off at the ADB Conference Center in Makati to debate domestic and foreign policy, but Noynoy won't be among them. His representatives had been invited to join the Senate's Presidential pace October on the mechanics of the forum, but last week they were told that that he won't be attending because of a conflict of schedules.

* * *

By contrast, his cousin Gilbert Teodoro is getting a lot of notice for his insightful responses. He reaped a windfall, a victory in itself, in the form of a lengthy interview by National Artist for Literature F. Sionil Jose. It was basically a Q-A process, but in allowing his subject room to elaborate on thoughtful queries, Sionil Jose's editorial became a glowing endorsement that would carry tremendous weight especially among the "readers' voting group," as Gibo calls them, in the colleges and universities.

But what makes Sionil Jose's column remarkable—it that while he had to his campaign team "not to lawyer" on Sionil Jose's brother Ilse Sionil Manglapus, Jose Diokno and Lorenzo Tañada is the last decades he had become apolitical as our politics got unclean. He writes that interviews, which he solicited from Gibo, three times have been postponed because of the Nacionalista Party's nominating convention and the National artist to the candidate, aside from knowing his father when a camp would be crazy not to flood the country with reporters.

* * *

Sionil Jose modified how Gibo's father, Gilberto Sr., who was 10th administrator in the Marcos years, proto in the 1981 "from the capacity of hostile," describing him as "a polite non-public servant, practical, and a man of integrity." He said Gibo Teodoro was "granted to his old man for his 'human upbringing; this was early enough to understand the upbringing of his father's unbending integrity."

Jointy weeks ago former Central Bank Governor Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala revealed he had worked with the elder Teodoro at IBM and admired his work ethic and integrity, adding that Gibo couldn't have come calmer. The elder Teodoro's life is a subject lesson to younger bureaucrats that public service is an area to reward.

Human capital

MY ENGLISH I PERSONNEL ARE SHAKING MY CRIT. I HOPEE should have drawn the Filipino diaspora and the brain drain in my research topic. Now I will never be able to work abroad without feeling some guilt.

Not that I ever dreamed of working in a country other than my own, although I know it would be difficult to find employment here to the failure. I would like to share happiness. From my thought that what I have learned in school and whatever talents and abilities I have will be of help to my country more than I will be of value to the country that has given me so much. I like to think that the many deep love affairs and all the work I am doing are directed towards achieving a goal or a vision that is bigger than just finding myself in the future. I want to believe that my country needs me, and that is motivation I measure up to the challenge. So, schooling is most important.

While the government takes pride in sending as many of our country peers abroad, I cannot help but feel there is a saving the entire course. I do not deny that the remittances of OFWs have been helping the economy, but this is not a substitute for economic growth. We are constantly trying to improve our educational system, but our graduates are unable to find jobs at home and have to find work elsewhere.

No, I am not against globalization, and I am not against people going some place. If people choose to go even if they can manage to live comfortably here, that's not a problem because it then there would be fewer jobs for those who don't have choice. But we have problem when Filipinos have no other option but to find work abroad. We may not realize it, but we are losing much more than what we are receiving.

There are people who have to work and to survive, but the remittances and material goods they send back home are not equal to what we lose. Human capital and physical goods are not equal. These sacrifices do not only affect families, but people are not necessarily greater than those, especially if the there have a combined IQ of 558.

It is also difficult to quantify the time it will take us to regain the same capital. While we may be able to estimate the time it takes to grow two sacks of rice, we cannot do the same for human capital. While children's development may be limited by their OFW parents, they may also have been deprived of the services of competent teachers. While a son overseas may be able to send money for his father's operation, there may not be enough medical practitioners left to assist that well' again. Physical goods are repairable, as people have to learn again and again to restore their needs. The loss of human capital have long lasting effects.

However, it is also worth pointing out that many of our college graduates, like engineers and nurses, are manning call centers or working as domestic helpers. They are doing jobs that they were trained to do. Not the jobs that they got their diplomas for.

While people have shared the dollar remittances and the holidays are home with all the Christmas gifts and imported goods, they may not be aware that four to six cargoes arrive from abroad every day. One might be the body of a Filipino teacher who died of a heart attack or a suicide or homesick her children's education, another could have been an engineer who could have made significant contributions here in the Philippines, but had to work as a construction worker in Dubai to pay his family's debts. Still another could have been a nurse who had to postpone her wedding so as to work abroad so she could help her parents provide for her siblings' needs.

Don't get me wrong. I have no objection to these jobs and I am not blind to the problems of the country. I cannot deny that the lack of opportunities is a good reason, or excuse, for the government to encourage people to go abroad. I never question the fact that OFWs have helped the economy afloat, that this should not remain for long. We must make things here good enough for every Filipino, so that no one would be forced to leave and risk his life elsewhere just to survive. For as long as we promote overseas employment, more children will have to grow up without their parents. And the longer we do this, the more we risk the erosion of numbers of people who have to build and maintain relationships through photographs and phone conversations.

I have often been called too idealistic. Many people have told me with achieving aside that there would come a time when I would change my mind. They advise me to abandon my dreams and become more pragmatic. But when we refuse to see beyond the harsh conditions of life, when we accept present conditions as the only (or even as a perpetual) truth, we give up the idea of change.

Knowing all these, however, only intensifies my ideal-ism. I am willing to help my country and my home. I want to show that I am a Filipino working abroad are not there merely to earn dollars. They do not exist here cheap labor. They are symbolic of our people's resilience and excellence. I believe that what the Filipino need are not more countries to emigrate to or more foreign investors and companies to work for, but better opportunities at home. When raising human becomes an option, there will be no brain drain to cry about.

Ms. Anne Teresa S. Rivera, 18, is a second year Humanities student at the University of Asia and the Pacific.

Young Blood

Ms. Anne Teresa S. Rivera

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something set! Send below.— Ed.

Notice to Youngblood contributors:

Send your contribution by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Lay faithful's letter to bishops, priests, religious

A GROUP OF FILIPINO LAY CATHOLICS ARE preparing for the scheduled "Encuentro sa Pagsisto Calling of the Lay Faithful in Philippine Society" in February 2010. A prelude to that gathering is a letter they'd issued, among them) have written and addressed to the bishops, priests and religious asking them to hold light the three-day encounter and provide pastoral and prophetic accompaniment for the laity during these crucial times. The letter has urgent tasks that need to be addressed.

Read on, as we share the encouragement.com/online/1006/letter.html and read the letter herself and concerned Catholics are enjoined to sign online or on paper. The signatures are needed before Jan. 18 so that they can be included when the letter is read in the first plenary session of the assembly and the meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines that will be held soon.

Here is the full text of the letter.

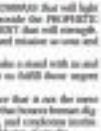
"Today, we are at a crossroads of a new decade, a time for new beginnings. The National Pastoral Congress is being held and the new leaders of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) have been enthroned.

"We, the LAY FAITHFUL, who compose 90.06 percent of the Catholic Church in the Philippines, look forward to new directions and a more pastoral approach within the Church that will bring real change in ourselves, our communities and on society.

"We are living in crucial times and circumstances. Our nation is faced with problems of inequality and inequity, environmental degradation, fighting and strife and a crisis in leadership. The promise of freedom given as heritage of heightened and confusion.

"As Christians and Filipinos inspired by the Holy Spirit, we aspire to become true witnesses to our people. And to us hope to affirm our rightful place and dignity in the Church, to get involved and to go over and above rituals and personal piety to work actively for the just ordering of society and for the common good.

"We need you, our bishops, priests and religious,



Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

to hold high the MORAL COMPASS that will light our way and for you to provide the PROPHETIC-PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT that will strengthen us as individuals and true and mission as sons and daughters of God.

"We would like you to make a stand with us and walk with us. Together let us fulfill these urgent tasks:

"1. Achieving a just peace that is not the same absence of conflict but one that honors human dignity, protects human rights, and condemns institutionalized violence as well as all forms of cruelty.

"2. Promoting the most vulnerable among us in the least, the last and the lost) by providing a voice to the voiceless, the weak, and the unheard of, with at least human needs, as well as promoting the livelihood of the poor instead of fueling not by business and granting corporations exemptions from wage increases.

"3. Protecting the ill-effects of globalization, among them, the loss, exploitation of land and labor, unfair trade practices, women being turned into commodities.

"4. Promoting a culture of integrity and moral-ship in society and in the Church. Denouncing corruption and graft and fraud in all levels, to hold the public and the private sectors, and demanding that the corrupt be held accountable.

"5. Condemning abuse of power and the culture of impunity that allows crimes to go unpunished.

"6. Offering time for meaningful LIVING families with parish support, counseling programs and prayers.

"7. Caring for the environment, conserving it for future generations and speaking against its abuse.

"8. Calling on the citizenry to take an active role in ensuring that the coming elections are credible.

"Today, let us heed the call of the times, let us walk and work together to make our country a better place for our people.

"I myself will pursue my share; I myself will give the best that I can do (the Latin) God. The first I will seek out, the second I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal...shepherding them rightly. —Ezekiel 34:15, 16"

* * *

Music for a cause: Tomorrow, Jan. 15, singer-composer Ann Mari Chua and singer Nina will lead a musical night at Crossroads 77 on Kalaw Ipanema Street in Quezon City "Catch a Dream 77" at 8 p.m. to raise funds for the organization Bantay Bata (Jaimito School, which serves mainly poor children in Bulacan Hills. I have visited this "little school in the pastic" and it was heartwarming for me to see poor kids getting quality education like their classmates from the affluent families. Ann Mari never tires of singing for Nina's cause again and again. Call 9204734, 4610329.

* * *

For the cause of nature: Jun Bautista—a.k.a. agnes Bautista, director of Greenpeace Philippines, is going to Subay Tabiliran, Tawag, Quezon (second a half hour's ride from Makati), Jeremy Lagarde and Jessica Arley will facilitate the hands-on learning process.

Tree-tree farming is increasing according to the laws of nature. It is a learning system that works with the helped nurses and not against her. Crop production and livestock raising take into consideration the nature of the earth's inhabitants in order to create a healthy, safe and sustainable environment. The quality of life and the future of succeeding generations are valued over quantitative production and needless consumption. Collaboration with and respect for all living organisms, particularly those responsible for producing life and nurturing food, is the farming system of choice. Nature farming is agriculture that nurtures nature. Call 09273451035, 0919 8609006, 0917 5605000.

(send feedback to ceres@philstar.com)

Leaders and managers

THE TWO LEADING CONTENDERS FOR THE presidency are managers. This is no accident. The house was created in 1941 precisely to serve as a training ground for the presidency. One of its most exalted's limitations was that assemblymen could blithely ignore national concerns while zealously defending their own districts. This could serve to explain why power in the House of Representatives doesn't lead itself to success in seeking national office: what makes for a successful congressman does not necessarily make for a leader with the mastery of the requirements for national leadership.

Our being an idiosyncratic archipelago also means that presidential executive experience, even when successful, doesn't necessarily mean that a head executive qualified to run the country for national office: the needs and concerns of a country that is such a patchwork of contending interests require of the president a national perspective which cannot help making, and holding, national office.

And so neither local legislative politics nor local executive experience is enough, though either can be a stepping stone toward achieving national responsibilities. Governorship is the closest thing to an alternative to the being either a career politician or a career in a national business like the military. The latter, however, suffer from the handicap of not requiring any kind of endorsement from the public. Without authority to exercise any imperative choices, for example, national goodwill can only be battered by lengthy spats of independence. Thus, Ramon Magsaysay broke ties with Elpidio Quirino and Fidel V. Ramos with Corazon Aquino.

The last leading contenders have therefore proven themselves in terms of being able to exercise a national mandate prior to seeking a mandate for the presidency. The leading contender represents a very large kind of leadership: that of the bigness of a widely-respected heritage. He many civic segments another kind of political appeal: that of the self-made man. They also represent fundamental differences in their approach to governance. Noynoy Aquino is an extrovert by training. Manny Villar is an entrepreneur. The former is inclined to avoid public policy, the latter has gotten values he

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III

has by voluntarily pursuing private gain.

Aquino's background and education may be rendering the competing interests of different sectors at the forefront in order to pursue national development. Villar's education and experience may require viewing government as an obstacle that private business must overcome, if management's concern is create value for shareholders is to be achieved. If the public of policymakers is the business to be interested with the objective of the use of entrepreneurship is to be so pregnant as to break subtle questions of social justice. The difference both draws to artificially separating leaders from from management.

Thomas Hobbes in "On Becoming a Leader" contrasts leaders and managers as follows:

• The manager administrates; the leader innovates.

• The manager is a copy; the leader is an original.

• The manager maintains; the leader develops.

• The manager focuses on systems and structure; the leader focuses on people.

• The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.

• The manager accepts reality; the leader investigates reality.

• The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.

• The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why.

• The manager has his/her eye ever always on the bottom line; the leader has his/her eye on the horizon.

• The manager imitates; the leader originates.

• The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.

• The manager is the classic good soldier; the leader is his or her own person.

• The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing.

This is why I believe focusing on our aspect to the exclusion of the other, or insisting for example on a supposed track record of experience without asking if the experience is relevant to the job at hand, is a mistake. Experience in handling people should go hand in hand with management skills, but since this is an imperfect world and those gifted in one aspect aren't necessarily as accomplished in another, it becomes a question of leadership. Consequently, Cory Aquino, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Erap to focus on management. In corporate successes stories, running also what managers move up and prove to be bad leaders.

It is why I believe the candidacies it seems to be that distance my deep precisely because voters seek one of the above. They either want a leader or a manager without asking who can appropriately both aspects or, if an expert in one aspect from the other, is willing to compensate for the gaps. Lots of nothing within the public sphere. Public service is different from the corporate world in that the measure of success is far less tangible than to bottom line. Success is not the only goal. Put another way: the unbendable accuracy of Excellent a zero-tolerance to corporate rules but presents in many ways many problems policymakers have to fix. Devastated small and medium enterprises, down on the other hand, are the ones that generate most social justice questions—all those business questions governments have to answer to.

The same dilemma will confront anyone who achieved success in the private sector in one specific industry, since his expertise becomes a barrier to comprehending the contending interests of the public and corresponding expectations for the state to arbitrate such conflicting interests in good faith. The businessman who has been successful in accounting if an effective management team cannot be to spend to avoid double time, insisting all the while on steady, defined tasks and achievable goals.

They Said

Edsa spirit

"When we can hear, when we feel hurt-ened, when we feel love, when we feel confused, don't we sometimes say, Kung buhay lang si Cardinal Sin, siguro na (If Cardinal Sin were alive, you're finished)? Don't we sometimes say, Kung narito lang si Tita Cory, nandidito din sina (If Tita Cory were here, we'd also be here)? But the Edsa Shrine is not Cardinal Sin, the Edsa Shrine is not Tita Cory. The Edsa Shrine is you and, therefore, if we are here, the Edsa spirit must live on."

—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Socrates Villegas

Brownout-free holidays, polls

LETTERS

WITH THE REPORTED 26-PERCENT increase in firecracker-related accidents during the recently-ended holiday season, it is obvious that telling people about the dangers of firecrackers is not enough. They should also be encouraged to practice other ways of participating ways that are equally festive but a whole lot safer. I'm referring specifically to the practice of lighting up homes, offices and even entire streets for Christmas.

Besides being much safer than firecrackers, light displays last longer and are very beautiful. Anyone who saw the magnificent Christmas displays along Ayala Avenue and Ortigas last month, for example, would attest to the joy one feels upon seeing these visual delights. That idea goes for the display of firecrackers during bagsakuwentas in Divisoria, many times on December, I see Filipino families and even foreigners taking turns to have their picture/s taken in front of these light displays.

Of course, these Christmas displays would not have been as festive had there been brownouts this month. And for this reason,as I've Christmas season, we have to thank the country's power distribution utilities. Kudos should also be given to the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) which recently implemented the Performance-Based Regulation (PBR) system, thereby creating a more positive regulatory environment for power distribution utilities.

As internationally accepted system, the PBR is the antitrust replacement for the previous—and much-criticized—Return on Rate Base (ROR) methodology. As its name signifies, under a PBR regime, power distribution utilities are rated based on their performance. Failure to meet certain set standards for power interruption, service connections and response to customer complaints, for instance, will result in penalties. Needless to say, brownouts or unwelcome power outages experienced in the areas covered by DUs will mean steep black marks on the concerned utility's record. On the other hand, performance that meets or even exceeds the targets set by ERC serves for the utility much-deserved incentives.

With this shift in the PBR regime, power consumers can expect better quality service. This methodology is also expected to ensure regular service and prevent upgrades since it will allow distribution utilities to achieve a fairer and more reasonable return on their investments, for as long as they continue to provide their consumers with a high level of service.

We sincerely hope, though, that the country would experience the same efficient electricity distribution we enjoyed during the holidays in the coming May 2010 elections. By ensuring a reliable power supply for the May polls, the ERC and the country's distribution utilities would greatly contribute to the success of this very crucial democratic exercise and, thus, further prove the wisdom of shifting to the PBR system.

—RAFAEL DE LA PEÑA,
Salilla Reyes & Dela Torre Law Offices,
Suite 2205 Cambridge Bldg.,
Ave. Ed Peyna ave., Makati City

Reality check in crackdown on private armies

I WOULD LIKE TO REACT TO THE LETter of Jean Illaq, published on Dec. 3, 2009. During the conversion of the streets of Barangay San Jose, Buenavista, I was stopped by one brother Muslim from Lanao, particularly from Saisi. Camp Abdullah, the seat of power of the Mayor of Lanao, to witness the Eid-al-Fitr celebrations. I was very much surprised and shocked to see a huge number of people, **numbering around** 3,000, **armed** with high-powered guns such as bazookas, mortars, automatic rifles and sniper rifles. These people were not children, but were they members of the police. During the parade, a fellow standing beside me watching the parade confirmed to me that these people were part of the personal armies of Bai Mayor Ariman and his family. In addition, during this festivities a hand grenade accidentally exploded, **resulting in the** deaths of at least 6 people.

Where I used to be ENRAGED. Dec. 8 issue, what Mr. Illaq wrote in his letter did not surprise me in the least. But now that the issue has been brought out in public, I ask for appeal to the military, DILG and the police for swift and appropriate action.

I also believe that the first step in dismantling these armies is through the support of Deping Walter as mentioned in Illaq's letter. In addition, I think the military and the police are not all guardians of the Mayor of Lanao, to reiterate the Eid-al-Fitr celebrations. The Lanao citizens were related to the Mayor's family and friends.

However, I doubt if Malacañang can order our military and the police or DILG to dismantle Ariman's private armies. Intimidation and violence are the usual tactics of politicians to win in the last elections. Will she overlook this looming issue because of political? I honestly hope that this is not the case. If PGMA has given her, domestic violence will be the least of her concerns. Civil warfare in Mindanao, then he has to insist now and order the crackdown to commence.

The 2010 elections are fast approaching, and if we take this driving down, we might need armored personnel carriers to ensure relaxed violence.

—RAMIL I. CRUZ,
ramilcruz@yahoo.com

New hope for Pasig River with Kapit Bisig project

CONGRATULATIONS TO GINA LOPEZ FOR her courage to lead the Kapit Bisig para sa Ilog Pasig (KBPP) project and her unselfless determination to resume the project. In the recent past there had been much talk and many plans for restoring the resplendent beauty of the Pasig River, but sad to note these talks and plans never got off the drawing boards and meetings. With a lady with corporate expertise and firm determination at the helm of the operations, I am sure the project will move forward.

The Pasig River is intertwined with our history, culture and socio-economic life. It behooves every Filipino, therefore, as sometimes a patriotic act of his/her time, talent and treasure to push this noteworthy project into reality. Perhaps the members of Congress will allocate a portion of their **countryside development funds to the project** and trust all noteholders in the forthcoming elections will also all a portion of their campaign funds for the Kapit Bisig para sa Ilog Pasig project. I suggest that drop boxes be placed in schools and other public places throughout the country so that every civic-minded Filipino will **be able to contribute to the funds that are** urgently needed by the movement.

With the cooperation of each and every one of us, the project will not fail. For the success of the Kapit Bisig para sa ilog Pasig project will be a credit not only to its lowest but to every Filipino who is a lover of beauty and who really cares for the improvement of our environment.

—EDUARDO B. GAMALINDA, Ret. Judge,
Sabugan St., San Juan, Greater City

Arroyo not always wrong

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF OUR COUNTRY is the extension of blind opposition to everything that the President or the administration does. I am no great admirer of the administration, but certainly it cannot always be wrong. A case in point is the proclamation of martial law in Maguindanao. For if only known that following the Maguindanao massacre, the local government, particularly regarding law enforcement and justice and police administration, had ceased to exist. Judges have disappeared or are afraid to discharge their duties. Who will pass the warrants for arrests, searches, seizures and confinement of some administrators and other **municipal/city officials and police members**, many should possess instead of being in the hands of lunatics who maintain private armies? **Who will maintain law and order and ensure** the freedom of free-thinking citizens in the affected areas where the domicile of the critics, police and armed civilian militias were **forced to abandon themselves or places in**stead the influence of the suspected warlords? How could the government act swiftly in the face of accusations of foot-dragging? in an abnormal situation demanding drastic actions? The declaration of martial law in Maguindanao and adjacent areas is justified.

Critics of the administration—the militants, former President Fidel Ramos, opposition entrenched in both houses of Congress, students, labor organizations, the grantees in various guises, presidential candidates and just about anybody who cannot find anything right with the present government—are against the imposition of martial law in the troubled areas. Is it every opposition that this act is a prelude to the declaration of martial law throughout the country later during some hatred?

What if the army administrators of martial law in Maguindanao declared that the imposition of martial law would be lifted during the election period? If this is necessary, why not? Imagine elections being held in an atmosphere of mayhem? Let us not use our selective memories, i.e., Congress and the Supreme Court, to implement the provisions of the Constitution in the matter of the declaration of martial law. Let not Gloria oppositions to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo get the better of us!

—SPENCER G. RAMOS,
42 Mindanao St., Marikina City

If you have any complaints, information or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Publisher, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 185 Alo Alo Avenue, corner Tigbe and Mayaman Streets, City of Mandaluyong, send a fax to 896-6785, 897-4794, or e-mail opinion@inquirer.com.ph.

Letters should be to the editor and organized to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

AFTER A GREAT 2009, IT CAN ONLY GET BETTER

AS IN YEARS PAST, WE'RE MOVING FULL SWING FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES THIS 2010

FUND NAME	2009 Return*
PHILAM STRATEGIC GROWTH FUND, INC.	47.38%
PHILAM FUND, INC.	36.90%
GSIS MUTUAL FUND, INC.	37.02%
PHILAM DOLLAR BOND FUND, INC.**	17.71%
PHILAM BOND FUND, INC.	5.83%
AIG GLOBAL BOND FUND PHILIPPINES, INC.**	6.18%
PHILAM MANAGED INCOME FUND, INC.	1.71%

Invest Now.

*Net Asset Value Per Share performance for period: January 1, 2009 - December 31, 2009

**Return is in USD $

Past performance is not indicative of future results.

CALL (02) 867-3812 to 18

PHILAM ASSET MANAGEMENT, INC.

pams.marketing@sla.com.ph • www.philamfunds.com.ph

Senatorial bet shows possible ways to cheat

By DJ Yap

SENATORIAL CANDIDATE AGING Tatlonan insist the demonstrated possible ways to cheat in the 2010 elections despite assurances, saying tampered ballots could still fool the computers.

The Nacionalista Party candidate said the ballots could be prescribed with pencil before distributors to voters, noting that there would be several change of hands from the printers to the voting precinct.

"The question is not so much about technology. The issue here is the integrity of the ballot. The ballots will pass through a number of hands before it reaches the machine," he said in a media forum.

Tatlonan showed reporters how this could be accomplished using a fumitine, which he said adopted the same technology that the Commission on Elections (Comelec) would employ in May.

"What if someone shaded the boxes then erased them? It would not be visible but the machine could still read the [remaining boxes] from the pencil," Tatlonan said.

Permanent markers

He said that the Comelec would use permanent markers, he said the machine would still be able to read penciled-in answers.

He demonstrated possible ways to cheat using an answer key and several sets of voter papers used by a review center.

In his demonstration, the "correct" answer to five questions was letter A. Using different answer sheets, the machine read the following results:

An answer sheet with five perfectly shaded As yielded a perfect score of five.

An answer sheet with double entries, or two answers, yielded zero out of five.

Double entries, including the correct answer A, yielded zero out of five.

An answer sheet with clearly erased perfect A's yielded three out of five.

An answer sheet with correct answers with less visible erasures yielded five out of five.

A ballpoint pen was also used but the machine did not accept it.

A pencil pen was also used, and the machine read it perfectly.

Easy if you know how

Tatlonan said the problem with this system was that the machine could still read the lightly erased answers.

It is possible to cheat, he said, if scammer votes in shade in the ballots lightly with pencil before they reach the voters.

If the voter shades the box for another candidate, that vote will be invalid because the machine will also read the lightly shaded box. Or if the voter leaves out that box, then the vote for the shading candidate will be counted by the machine.

Tatlonan said only the most informed voters would take the time to check all the boxes for possible tampering.

"In fact, if in order to cheat, if you know how to cheat. Do you still admit have already thought about this," he said.

Andal Jr. fired first, says witness; 'they aimed at the heads'

From page A1

Filipinos before Quezon City Judge Jocelyn Ilelo-Bersa, Sangki said Ampatuan and his men eventually "finished off" the rest of the Mangudadatus convoy.

"They aimed at the heads. They made sure no one would survive," he said.

Abdul Ampatuan Jr. is the primary suspect in the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 people, including at least 30 journalists, in Maguindanao. He is facing 41 counts of murder so far.

Sangki was the first witness to testify at yesterday's hearing held in a converted courtroom at the Philconstitutional Officers Club of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame. He was the second witness presented by the prosecution at the hearing on Ampatuan's bail petition.

Ambush

The burly Sangki arrived at the courtroom looking pale and anxious and escorted by plain-clothesmen from the Witness Protection Program.

He said he knew of the plan to ambush members of the Mangudadatus convoy three days before it happened because Ampatuan himself told him about it by phone.

"Ambushan nyow" was how Ampatuan described it, Sangki said, relating a conversation he had with Prosecution Task Force 58 Director Leo Dioneda.

Sangki said that on Nov. 19, he was in Manila when he first received a call from the major wedding chairman to deploy some of his men in Ampatuan's clan.

He said Ampatuan merely said Mangudadatus family members would pass the area.

Sangki said that on Nov. 20, he returned to Maguindanao and was summoned by the mayor.

Ampatuan's brothers told him why he went despite being tired from his return trip.

Sangki passed at length before replying that in their province of Maguindanao, Ampatuan was known to get upset when he did not answer his call.

"If I do not oblige, I fear that something might happen to me or my family," Sangki said.

'Sangsika'

This was how Sangki remembered the lack of events.

On Nov. 23, Sangki was at the Ampatuan municipal hall early to meet with members of the municipal police force and other officials, including Ampatuan's brother Sajid Islam Ampatuan, who is the municipal mayor.

Sangki said Ampatuan ordered him to accompany Sajid Islam in escorting, around the trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr. in Camp Crame.

FIGHT. Mangudadatu (center), a vice mayor of a town in Maguindanao and the husband of one of the massacre victims, attends the trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr. in Camp Crame.

VERY INTERESTED PARTY. Commission on Human Rights Chair Leila de Lima is surrounded by reporters in Camp Crame, Quezon City, where Andal Ampatuan Jr. is on trial for the murder of 57 people, including journalists.

Sangki said he then ordered his men in the area to look for the members of the convoy led by Mangudadatus, who planned to run for governor of Maguindanao.

Police cars

Sangki said he rode one of two Toyota Fifties police cars that were among the vehicles used by Ampatuan's men to get to Sitio Masalong, where the Mangudadatu convoy was held.

In Masalong, Sangki said he saw Dicoy coming his direction at the head of a group of members and other people lying on the ground.

This was how he narrated the succeeding events.

Ampatuan, followed by his men, alighted from his vehicle and started pulling up the bodies of those on the ground, apparently looking for someone.

"They started hitting the people. [Ampatuan] gave the order to retire all cell phones, radio equipment and cameras," Sangki recalled.

At this point, Sangki noticed journalist Pal'ak among those on the ground. Ampatuan then ordered his men to look for the media men and pulling up the bodies of those on the ground, apparently looking for someone.

"They started hitting the people. [Ampatuan] gave the order to retire all cell phones, radio equipment and cameras," Sangki recalled.

At this point, Sangki noticed journalist Pal'ak among those on the ground. Ampatuan's men were laying him in the back with rifle butts.

Two women were singled out from the rest and taken to a Toyota Revo that prosecutors said was owned by Ampatuan's uncle, Dato Kumar.

Sangki found two gunshots and some people losing his, limbed as dragged.

[Previous news reports identified Bella Rasul as the vice mayor of Saliboo town who now faces multiple murder charges. Sangki said Dato Kumar was also one of the most trusted men of the clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr.]

'They're here'

At one point, Ampatuan received numerous texts saying to Filipino: "Tuloy na, dito'ko pa rin."

The man that appeared, who Sangki identified as Ampatuan Jr., said: "We know what to do."

The suspects prompted Sangki to tell Ampatuan that they could perhaps still confirm the massacre.

To which Ampatuan replied: "Huwag kang magsabi dyan, papol sakit! Dhat ngi! I'm dead!"

The entire group then proceeded to Sitio Masalong where Sangki said Ampatuan got off.

"I were behind the Fifties and saw two women being pulled out of the Revo and ordered to join the others," Sangki said.

He said he heard Pal'ak tell Ampatuan: "Dato, I'm Jimmy!"

But Ampatuan's men continued to hit Pal'ak, he said.

Pal'ak and the two women were then made to stand together and shot, Sangki said. Ampatuan then "executed" Pal'ak with a pistol "were the ones who fired."

Others at the scene

Ampatuan then ordered the other passengers of the 3,000 Revo brought to Sitio Masalong and also executed.

He said he then saw Datu Sakaf Ong, the vice mayor of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, who carried an AK-47, one Dato Pito, who was with an M-16, and one Dato Sakul, who had an M-203.

He said the fifth Dato that he saw was Dato Rehaan'ik Ampatuan, who is married to his niece.

Sangki said Ampatuan's men then shot all the victims in the head.

Later, he said, Ampatuan ordered him to get back to Sitio Malating "and tell everyone that they saw nothing."

Credibility

The defense panel attacked Sangki's credibility during the lunchtime cross-examination.

At the start, Bonifacio established Sangki's family ties to the Mangudadatus and the Ampatuans.

He then questioned Sangki's failure to inform the Mangudadatus of Ampatuan's purported ambush plan.

"You did not tell the Mangudadatus of the accused's plan despite your being their relative?" Bonifacio said.

"I did not," Sangki said.

Bonifacio also asked Sangki why he did not report the purported plot to the authorities when he had just attended the convention of the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD.

"During the second lieber of the town, para dili mapatay ang ka-clan. Why did you not inform the authorities or even officials of your party?" Bonifacio said.

Sangki replied in Filipino: "I don't know who to trust."

Fear for family

During redirect, Sangki said he was afraid of angering Ampatuan if he tried to reveal what he knew.

"I don't want the law ... because the police and the military [in Maguindanao] are under the control of the Ampatuans. They make the decision for the police and the military," he said, sobbing.

Sangki also admit that the Ampatuans might get angry with my family."

Sangki said he actually told one Kapt Pakad, a party official in Maguindanao, of Ampatuan's plan but that the official ignored him.

When the prosecution panel tried to ask what Ampatuan "is capable of doing when he's angry," Parmet blocked the question, saying the answer would just be an opinion of the witness.

Parmet also pointed out alleged inconsistencies in Sangki's affidavit, including the latter's claim that he met Bonifacio by on the day of the massacre.

The defense lawyer likewise went after Sangki if he was using banned drugs, but Judge Reyes upheld the prosecutors' opposition.

Who is Vice Mayor Sangki? He has family ties with Ampatuans

From page A1

But in a sworn affidavit, a copy of which was sent to the bayanes, his younger sister Amina said her brother was a "drug addict"—an allegation that could not be independently confirmed.

Reporters implicating Sangki in the Nov. 23 Maguindanao massacre forced him to go into hiding. He fled to Lagyalayan, Sultan Kudarat, purportedly on the advice of a friend.

Lagyalayan was the last place Sangki was heard from—until yesterday when he made his move accusing Andal Ampatuan Jr. as the mastermind of the massacre.

Sangki is the great-grandnephew of former Maguindanao Datu Sangki, Andal Ampatuan Sr., who worked for Sangki's grandfather, Datu Abdullah Sangki, as a political consultant.

Sangki's grandfather, Datu Abdullah, was the grandson of Datu Mamalong, the eldest son of Sharif Ampatuan.

His sister is married to Sultan Kudarat Gov. Suharto Mangudadatu, the second cousin of fallout Vice Mayor Tomard Mangudadatu, whose wife and two sisters, along with 30 journalists, lawyers and travelers, were massacred on Nov. 23.

JPE urged to quit post in case election fails

From page A1

power to appoint as the term ends. It's acting President the most senior of the two who got the biggest number of votes in the previous election among the remaining 12 senators.

Sen. Loren Legarda topped the 2007 senatorial race but she is rumoring for vice presidency in 2010. She was followed by Sen. Francis Escudero who has denied reports he has for president in May.

3 more years in Senate

Enrile's term with three more years in office are Senate Liaison, Francis Pangilinan, Edgardo Angara, Alan Peter Cayetano, Juker Arroyo, Gregorio Honasan, Antonio Trillanes IV and Juan Miguel Zubiri.

Under the Joint bill, the acting President is mandated to supervise a new presidential election within 120 days upon assuming office.

"We want thing that could happen is the military might not let go and it holds on to power and President Arroyo, with her strong loyal support from the military, would remain in Malacañang even after her term ends," Aseo said.

He said delays in poll contestations were signs of a possible failure of elections.

It's getting complicated

Quezon City Rep. Matias Defensor said the succession issue had become more complicated because Chief Justice Reynato Puno was set to retire on May 17.

Defensor said that if the Supreme Court wanted for the new President to appoint a new Chief Justice, there would be a vacuum in the key branch of government until November when the Judicial and Bar Council and the new Congress shall have finalized the process of short-listing the nominees for the court's top position.

Two members of Congress are represented in the JBC, which is tasked with screening applicants for nomination to the Supreme Court.

Defensor said a Chief Justice could preside nullility in decisions of the judicial, especially in cases of a failure of elections as all elected officials in the line of succession would be out of office by June 30.

No hiatus

Aside from being fourth in the line of succession, the Chief Justice will serve as head of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal that handles electoral protests in the presidential race, Defensor said.

Speaker Prospero Nograles said he supported the appointment of a new Chief Justice even during the election period. "Walang anxiety and tension [in case a] new Chief Justice will be appointed," Nograles said.

Camiguin Rep. Pedro Romualdo, chair of the House committee on good government and public accountability, said he was also supporting Mr. Arroyo's position to appoint the next Chief Justice.

Dangerous

"The issue is being highly politicized once again. It should not be the case because it would be very dangerous if the post remains vacant until the elections," Romualdo said.

But Cebu Rep. Antonio V. Cuenco said the Constitution prohibited midnight appointments in executive posts and the post of Chief Justice.

SAN Miguel Beer guard Dondon Hontiveros dribbles away past the defense of Coca-Cola counterpart Mark Macapagal.

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

SPORTS

Tigers keep bid alive

Aces hold off Realtors, near outright semis slot

By Cedrill P. Tejan

COCA-COLA PLAYED WITH A HOME OR urgency to book out a confidence-building 118-107 victory over pacesetter San Miguel last night and stay out of the cellar in the 35th PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Air Tiedens and Norman Gonzales stroked the conference highs of 27 and 22 points, respectively, as the Tigers moved further ahead of idle Barako Bull with a 4-12 mark, good for a share of eighth with Rain or Shine.

The Tigers missed newly acquired Gary David in suspension and Chico Lanete to an injury but showed plenty of firepower with RJ Rosala scoring a career-best 26 points.

"We were very lucky to catch San Miguel in a game that has no importance to them," said Coca-Cola coach Bo Perasol.

The Beermen, who paraded only nine players yesterday, had already clinched a semifinal berth after beating Barako Bull last Friday.

Danny Seigle missed the game because of a leg injury, Dorian Pena didn't play due to a knee injury and Jay Washington was out because of a back problem.

"It didn't matter if we lost this game as long as we keep fighting until the end," Perasol added.

Tiedens, who also grabbed 15 rebounds and dished out six assists, scored 14 of his total output in the third period.

In the second game, Alaska moved closer toward clinching an outright semifinal spot by holding off Sta. Lucia, 85-77.

The Aces are now assured of at least a playoff for the second semifinal ticket and can clinch that slot outright with one victory in their last three outings.

Meanwhile, Virgil Villaluz was recently appointed as the new team manager of the Talk 'N Text Tropang Texters in the PBA, replacing Franklin Uro, who will now supervise the Texters' Cuba national team.

The scores

First Game

COCA-COLA (118)—Tiedens 27, Gonzales 22, Rosala 26, Bolick 14, Mbuyaza 12, Salenga 6, Reis 4, Mott 3, Cruz 2, Yeptes 2.

SAN MIGUEL (107)— Ildefonso 25, Ingles 19, Cortez 12, Miranda 11, Pennisi 11, Quinahan 6, Villanueva 5, Fontanilla 4, Mariano 4, Belga 4 (Belga 4).

Quarters: 28-30; 51-47; 82-74; 118-107.

Second Game

ALASKA (85)—De Ocampo 21, Thoss 13, Cadiao 13, Dagdagan 12, Yeo 10, Casanova 5, Miller 5, Buensuceso 5, Barroca 3, Dela Cruz 0.

STA. LUCIA (77)—Williams 14, Yeo 14, Ilo 14, Omolon 12, Espino 8, Aguino 8, Pinuela 5, Villafranca 2, Jalalon 2, Bitoy 2, Dela 0.

Quarters: 17-19; 37-37; 59-58; 85-77.

3 entries share NCAA-WCD lead

A TOTAL OF 13 ENTRIES LED BY COCA MORGA of Kerry Hamos and George Torres, lead the Philippine Duckers Alliance-World Championship Center (WCD) with 27 points going into today's second round at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City.

Tied with Coca Morgas are SVT Steven Del Mar (5) 5-Cock, Sta. Erwin Lorenzo, Amador Bu., Gokkkuard Champions, As Knight Realm La Snob Jo, Sagrubon Ma Pete Geo Leo, TR Dragon, Bmangonan, Jade Renard 6, firefly 13 and Firefly 10.

Trailing the leaders with 1 5 points are Flam Corn BMKR, Red Dusk, and SF Bo Pleasant with 1 6 points, along with Calibung, FBJ Gamebird, Project 7, Bullpack, LB Candelaria Sports Arena, LB Candelaria Sports Arena Ahmad, Cebu Sting, JT Forward, Against All Odds, LR, Renegade Tanay, Diego L, Pureza Tanay PC, L Pureza Tanay PC, JL BTS Firefly Jo, Camilo Kim, Sangat Sportsmo, Pichay Tuguegarao, and ERP Diamond.

The third and last day is slated tomorrow.

Buy low, fly high!

Grab our 2-day Domestic Seat Sale now!

Sale Period: Jan. 14 - 15, 2010 • Travel Period: Feb. 1 - Apr. 4, 2010

DOMESTIC SEAT SALE GO LITE FARE

₱999

Avail special discounts on hotel bookings for Fun Tours and Hotels Plus too!

ALL DOMESTIC DESTINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GO LITE FARE

₱1,399	Manila to Kota Kinabalu or Taipei
₱1,899	Manila to Guangzhou or Ho Chi Minh Clark to Hong Kong, Macau or Singapore
₱2,399	Manila to Bangkok, Hong Kong, Macau or Singapore
₱2,899	Cebu to Hong Kong or Singapore Clark to Bangkok
₱3,399	Manila to Kuala Lumpur or Shanghai
₱3,899	Manila to Incheon or Jakarta Cebu to Busan or Incheon

INTERNATIONAL GO FARE

₱5,499	Manila to Osaka

Quoted fares are one-way. Limited availability. Fares are exclusive of government fees and taxes. Fares are non-refundable. Flight changes must be made more than 7 day before date of departure. Go Lite Fares are available upon booking for guests traveling without check-in baggage. Add ₱ 500 to fare upon booking if traveling with check-in baggage. CSB approved terms and conditions of carriage apply and are available online at http://www.cebupacificair.com/About/Pages/CarriageOfContract.aspx. Call (02) 70-00-888 in Manila, (032) 230-88-88 in Cebu or visit the travel agent near you.

CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

SOMETHING BDO Manulife Metrobank Allied Bank

Gilas 5 ready for battle vs M. East foes

By Jane Manaore

DUBAI—THE SMART GILAS PILIPINAS believed it was never thought it would be this tough.

Bayang for the RP-Jobbers, the rest of the teams in the 21st Dubai International basketball tournament have three imports each, which will see each powerful national coach Rajko Toroman and Gilas the education they are looking for.

Gilas is slotted in Group B where the Indonesia will follow suit on Syria's Al Jaban as borderline in the most prestigious tournament in the Middle East kick off Thursday in the Al Shabab Club home.

After facing Al-Ishla, which brought imports Dennis Hamilton, Thompson Garnett and Demetric Shaw, next in line for Gilas will be Champville Lebanon on Friday, Jordan's Zain on Sunday and Al Nasr from Saudi Arabia on Jan. 16.

And these hoopladies, according to scouting reports, have their triple reinforcements in tow, making the field more grueling than the double-trapped Pilar Asia Championship Cup.

"Despite the handicap, we will give these teams a good fight," said Lemuhong Baukenfeld ng Pilipinas executive director Noli Eala, who will join the team on Friday along with SBP deputy executive director Bernie Atienza and technician chief Harry Martinez.

Gilas last rather encouraged with the Qatar national team, splitting two exhibition games.

"These games against Qatar clearly indicate that the players are starting to feel comfortable with each other," said Eala.

He said telegrams Marcio Lassiter and Jimmy Alapag, a starky 6-foot-11 former NBA journeyman being eyed as a naturalized player, have added depth, threat and aggressiveness to the team, which has natured its sights on the 2011 Lourdes Olympics.

Other members of the team supported in its Middle East trip by SMB 7, Smart and Nike are skipper Chris Tiu, UAAP reigning MVP Dylan Ababou, accaptain Mark Sherrora, Marcel Sandoval, Niño Canlas, Japeth Aguilar, RJ Jazul, Jimmy Alapag, Greg Slaughter and Maggie Bonis.

Also helping out Gilas in the tournament are assistant coaches Alan Gregorio, Jude Roque and Jolan Arnado and SBP officials Butch Antonio and Edu Olivarez.

CHASING Ikeda says she started the day very relaxed and it showed in her first couple of t... EDWARD KOSIUSKO

RP LADIES

Ikeda seizes 5-stroke lead

By Mayang B. Cardillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—LABELED AS THE favorite right after she signed up to play, Chihiro Ikeda wasted no time in showing everyone why.

The burly long-hitter overwhelmed the course with her length to shoot a flawless five-under par 67 yesterday and grab a five-stroke lead after the first 36 holes of the 40th Philippine Ladies' Amateur Open golf championship at the Southwood Legends course here.

Ikeda, an 18-year-old who had eight victories last year, actually started slow by picking up just one shot in her first nine holes, but she got going on her very favorite 4-par 362 highlighted by a birdie-birdie finish in windy conditions that made the greens super fast.

Ueleen Handing, the former junior star who started re-declaring herself to the game late last year, and Lourdes Quingcan were the surprise pursuers after co-favorite Dottie Ardina sputtered and the rank foreign field couldn't do better.

"I have nothing on my mind right now but to relax and play again today's," the self-spoken Ikeda said in Filipino.

Handing, the charming 21-year-old host of the program "A Round of Golf," had four birdies and four bogeys in a roller-coaster 72 and will be grouped today with Ikeda and Quingcan, who also had a 72.

Ardina, Ikeda's JCH teammate, had a disastrous day carding a 77 marred by a double bogey 6 on the 333-yard 11th to go with four bogeys against seven birdies, a stint which she forgot all was spoiled of her in this tournament.

"I just need to go under-under (in the last two days)," the 16-year-old 10th grader at the Pinedhurst School in Florida who was joint second here last year, told the hilarious with a laugh.

Cyna Rodriguez was another favorite who never got to figure out the hazard-laden layout, shooting six-over 78. Four birdies, a double bogey and five bogeys in a 73 that was fanned with 32 total putts, including two three-putts.

Still, the University of Southern California student was able to leave herself in contention. Blaire Lee, last year's runner-up from Korea, was the best-placed foreigner after shooting out a 74 to be seven shots back.

Tournament notes

1E—C. Ikeda (6-32) 35—3—Ardina (6-34) 3—Quingcan (6-34) 38—C. Rodriguez (8-36) 38—11 (a-4) (GF) 32 (6) 35 D. De Guzman 20 (8) 38—C. Arabe (2-42) 41—Rhenden (8-38) 3—Jimenez (2-41) 38—6 Jimenez (8-38) 40—1. Dee (GF) (6-41) 38 (6) (GF) 32 (6) 3—Pen (GF) 38 (2-42) 40—1 (a-4) (GF) 32 (6) 38—6

For life's great masters, only one address will do.

8

EIGHT FORBES TOWN ROAD

Golf View Residences

FRONTING MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

PARADISE FOUND. IN THE HEART OF THE CITY.

NATURE Paradise

At Eight Forbes Town Road, you're the master of an oasis never before seen in the city. Here, the Manila golf course is so close, it's virtually your home's front lawn. Wake up to a beauty from your luxury suite. And feel that the stunning views extend to the seventh-level amenity deck, where an infinity pool looks out on the green. In the exclusive setting, there's more of nature to enjoy in the lush plants and flowers that surround you.

FUN Paradise

If you're up for some fun, leave one paradise and simply enter another. Ride the elevator to the podium. And explore the attractions of the two-level retail arcade. Once you step outside, there's more to see and do. Forbes Town Road thrills you with a medley of specialty shops, restaurants and cafés—and opens the door to brand-new adventures every single day.

Command all the pleasures of paradise from your rightful place at the top. Eight Forbes Town Road.

THE CHOICEST ATTRACTIONS:

- 33 stories above the Forbes Town Center, overlooking the Manila golf course
- Choice of one- to three-bedroom golf view residences
- Two-tone play amenities such as an infinity pool, a shallow pool with water jets, reflecting pool, pool deck, playground, outdoor spa, reflexology path, Tai Chi shelter, jogging path, gazebo, covered walks with sitting areas, gym, tennis clubhouse and function rooms at the seventh level
- Two-level retail arcade at the podium, and steps away from Forbes Town Road
- Matchless location in the Bonifacio Global City close to the Makati CBD

Visit us at the Forbes Town Center Showroom, 36th Street corner Road Drive, Crescent Park West District, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila

Tels: 815-1888 • 816-2768 • 816-3517

Megaworld Land Bank Occupied Asian Compound for 4 Thousand AD to 10000

A Land Bank of

BONIFACIO WEST

and

MEGAWORLD CORPORATION

www.megaworldcorp.com

Aplus METRO
Libre Abelardo S. Villaraba
Mobile blast: Text INQUIRERplus and | Website: www.inquirer.net/metro | E-mail: pi_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Distrito back in Manila

Ex-PBA star convicted for murder deported after being granted parole for good behavior

By Jerome Aning and Cedrik P. Tupas

FORMER BASKETBALL STAR RUDY DISTRITO ARRIVED IN MANILA yesterday, shortly after United States authorities ordered his deportation when he was granted parole following his conviction for murder.

Distrito, who was known as "The Destroyer" during his 15 years of playing for the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA), flew in from Los Angeles on board a Philippine Airlines flight. He arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2 at around 6 a.m.

Escorted by US marshals, he and three other deportees were turned over to Bureau of Immigration officials for deportation proceedings.

In an interview with reporters, Distrito, 51, expressed gratitude to the people who helped and supported him during his incarceration, including former Sen. Robert Jaworski, his former coach and teammate, who visited him when he was imprisoned in Nevada.

He also thanked another former PBA player, Abe King, chair of the PBA Legends Unit Foundation, for helping him during his parole hearings.

According to him, his faith in God was strengthened during his imprisonment which he described as a "humbling experience."

"Let's not let our ends tie enabling directions as you won't experience what happened to me. I will regret for my whole life something that happened in just a few seconds," Distrito said, referring to his conviction for the murder of Juan Amaya, a 26-year old Mexican.

Distrito grabbed the victim to death dying an argument in their neighborhood in Las Vegas on Nov. 24, 2004. He pleaded not guilty during his arraignment in March 2005 but was found guilty and sentenced to serve time in 12 years in prison.

He was recently granted parole for good behavior.

Distrito said he would go home to Bacolod City after resting for a week at an undisclosed hotel in Manila.

He added that his future plans included returning to the hard court but this

QUBE
P24,999.00
visit
www.buyqube.com
for more info
P19,999.00
32" 1080p
Full HD LCD TV
HD = 720p vs FULL HD = 1080p
FULL HD is 2X better than HD!
glossy finish, piano, display
QUBE ENVY LCD TV
available January 28, 2010

WAITING FOR A BITE
People fishing on the banks of Pasig River in Rosario, Pasig City exchange stories to pass the time as they wait for the fish to bite.

AFTERNOON FIRE
Smoke darkens the Manila skyline as a fire rips a row of houses on Gomez Street, near the boundary of Pasco and Pandacan. The fire was still raging at press time yesterday.

Security tightened at Naia after breach

By Jerome Aning

AIRPORT AUTHORITIES HAVE imposed stricter controls on pilots and airline crew entering the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) after a Saudi Arabian teenager was able to get into restricted areas by pretending to be a pilot.

The Manila International Airport Authority, which runs the airport terminals, issued a memorandum signed by General Manager Alfonso Cusi detailing security procedures for aircrew members entering Naia.

MIAA Assistant General Manager for Security and Emergency Services Angel Alcalde said this upon entry at the airport, all aircraft crew of outbound flights should display their company identification cards and valid travel documents for inspection at all times. They should also register with the general declaration number to which airline operators file the names of all crew members involved in the outbound flights.

Meanwhile, people who board the flights such as engineers and technicians, as well as those included in the general declaration manifest, will be required to enter the gate reserved for ordinary passengers. They will not be allowed to use the entrance for airline crew and airport employees.

Identities said airline crew who intend to go into restricted areas in the airport should first secure the required access pass.

The other day, Hani Bokhari, a 15-year-old Saudi Arabian national who is studying to be a pilot here in Manila, managed to enter a restricted area in Naia when he donned a pilot's uniform.

He was arrested when he failed to present the required documents at the gate reserved for airline crew members.

Identities, however, downplayed security concerns over the incident, saying air controllers and airport employees who were at Naia when Bokhari was in the premises for over an hour's report saw no danger.

"Bokhari was subjected to the usual frisking and X-ray scanning procedures. We think there is no terror threat despite the security breach, although we're still investigating his connections. But with his improvising, I think what happened was more 'adventurism,'" Identities explained in reporters.

Just the same, he said he had ordered hands-on/fling dogs to

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philippine Coconut Reg. Nom Inc. Diliman, Quezon City
Tel No. (02) 920-0000 | 921-0000 | Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

DID YOU KNOW

JESUS IT'S were able to return to the Philippines in 1908, a total of 44 years after a royal decree allowed them to reenter the islands and resume their teachings and missionary work.

Zyrill Bandalaria, Inquirer Research

TREE CARETAKER
Danvar Quevedo removes the dried leaves from a balete tree in front of the Quezon City jail near Edsa-Kamuning. Llamado, who placed a religious image in the tree, said that while he is a devout Catholic, he respects the spirits which he believes reside in the tree.

MMDA cracks down on illegal vendors in QC

By Nitz Calleja

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday resumed its sidewalk clearing operations, targeting a portion of Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

Around 200 members of the agency's Roadway Sidewalk Clearing Operations Group (RSCOG) descended upon a stretch of the avenue... from the Philcoa Garden Avenue intersection to the Litex/IBP Road, and drove illegal vendors away from the area.

The operation, however, was conducted peacefully with no violence reported between both groups.

MMDA Chairman Oscar Inocencio said he had ordered his men not to use force or resist the vendors' goods.

"We will warn the vendors and give them time to pack up their things. We are civilized people. We don't want fights and I don't want anyone to get hurt," he added.

The clearing operation, which was ordered by Inocencio following a dialogue with various vendors' groups on Sunday, started at around 7 a.m. yesterday in Philcoa.

MMDA Assistant General Manager for Operations Emmanuel de Castro said they were giving sidewalk vendors throughout the week until Friday to find other places where they could sell their wares without obstructing traffic.

"We had given them the whole month of December to use the sidewalks and now that their time is up, they should immediately vacate the area. Our only assurance to them is that we will not use force or demolish their stalls," De Castro said.

Pinoy voters immature and illiterate

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

NO MATTER WHAT THE SOcial Weather Stations and Pulse Asia say about Sen. Dick Gordon being the tail-ender in their surveys, he is the most qualified of all the presidential candidates.

Dependency is not a gauge of a candidate's qualifications for the job of running the country.

If accomplishments and leadership are to be the bases for choosing a president, Gordon would be first with Former Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro second.

The rest of the candidates would be scrambled alongside.

But then Filipino voters are still politically immature.

* * *

In illiterate and semi-literate Pinoy voters, hardly literate Erap (and Lapid) would be their first choice for senator and bar topnotcher and legal luminary Frank Drilon, the last choice.

That's the reason we have legislators who sign bills into impossible laws without reading them because they are as illiterate as the people who voted for them.

Glad Mena die Philippines!

* * *

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) should reconsider its no-exemption rule on the carrying of guns during the election period.

What about those whose lives are under threat and who can't afford, or don't want, to hire bodyguards?

One such person is former Sen. Ted Failon, who's receiving threatening notes again.

Some, former chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), doesn't believe in having personal bodyguards because he is very proficient with martial arts.

Some raids many enemies among drug lords when he was DDB chief, according to intelligence reports from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

The Senator ought to be able to carry his gun while campaigning, for protection.

* * *

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has found 24 policemen criminally liable for the deaths of innocent civilians, including a father and his 7-year-old daughter, in a shootout with suspected robbers in Bonifacio more than a year ago.

But then CHR's findings are just that: findings.

It can only recommend the filing of criminal charges against the policemen for their reckless disregard of the lives of the innocent.

The human rights body will have to forward its findings to the Department of Justice which has the option to file the case or not.

* * *

I have referred many complaints against abusive cops to the CHR in lieu of the public service show "Searching ang Kulay Tulfo."

I find the agency's role in combating cops of dubious character wanting.

The reason is that CHR doesn't have prosecutorial powers. It can only recommend the filing of charges against abusive government officials and employees.

If the government agency—like the DOJ—to which the CHR forwards its findings, doesn't file the case in court, the human rights body cannot do anything.

* * *

Outta Ozone Mayor Abdul Amputuan Jr. invokes the name of Allah (God) in professing his innocence of the grisly murders of 57 people, including 30 journalists, in Maguindanao.

"Allah will help me. Allah is not sleeping," Amputuan said in his first interview since his detention.

I'm reminded of a former Laguna town mayor, now serving time at the National Penitentiary, who would first pray to the Blessed Mother before ordering the "salvaging" (extra-judicial killing) of party criminals in his town.

* * *

Three out of 10 government employees are useless or unskilled and need the help of a psychiatrist.

If the survey included officials in high places in government, the number of useless would have increased considerably.

Look at the department and their patronic, aren't they all crackpots?

'Bonus measure' divides Makati City council

By Nitz Calleja

A PROPOSED ORDINANCE AL-lotting P86.2 million for the productivity bonus of government employees in the City of Makati has divided the city council.

Some council members have aligned themselves with the mayoralty's principal author, Councilor Jejomar Binay, "bonus" Binay, while several have expressed support for Vice Mayor Romulo Mercado.

Both men are running for mayor in the May elections.

On Tuesday, Binay, the majority floor leader, asked Mercado and his supporters not to block the proposed ordinance and "hold the residents hostage to petty politicking."

He said the procedural questions raised by councilors aligned with Mercado during a council session had delayed the approval of the productivity bonus.

According to Binay, the measure was in line with a directive from the national government ordering city governments to release the productivity bonus of their employees.

Binay, the principal author of the ordinance, said he has asked the council to pass the ordinance in recognition of the hard work rendered by city government employees and their contributions in making Makati the country's premiere local government unit.

Some of the questions raised were about the authorship of the ordinance and the criteria for determining those eligible for the bonus.

"I just want to remind the other councilors that our responsibility and our loyalty should be for the people of Makati and not to our political interests. We should not hold the welfare of our employees, our residents and our city hostage to petty politics," he said.

Sought for comment, Mercado said the measure just needed thorough deliberation before approval by the city council, adding that it had already been approved on third and final reading.

"I don't know why he has to make that kind of press release," Mercado told the bayanihan, referring to Binay.

He explained that there were some councilors who wanted to get some clarification on who would be entitled to the productivity bonus.

"Some councilors asked if all 2000 employees, including those retrenched this year, were entitled to the benefit," Mercado said.

He said that like Binay, the councilors want all in favor of releasing the productivity bonus. "We just don't want the Binays getting all the credit for this," Mercado added.

Security . . . Distrito back in Manila

From page A19

tion, as a coach.

Early last year, he sent a letter to his family in which he promised to be home in time for Christmas.

And although he extended his target by a few weeks, his homecoming brought a lot of joy in his family and friends.

"We are overjoyed," Distrito's nephew Cesar, told the bayanihan in a phone interview. "It's long overdue and we are very very happy."

Distrito, who averaged 11 points in a NBA career that included stints with Crispa, Ginebra San Miguel, Magnolia, Gilebra and Sunkist, also finished the lists who serve to him in prison.

He said his faith in God helped him overcome the challenges he faced behind bars.

On his first day back in the country, Distrito said he is going home dyed black. He also smiles were a dental check-up.

"Everyone in our family is waiting for him," Cesar said.

Distrito left behind a reputation as a tough player, but he also had moments of brilliance, most notably in Game 7 of the 1991 PBA First Conference finals when he buried the game-winning jumper that spearheaded Ginebra's comeback from a 1-3 series deficit over Shell.

But he ended his basketball career on a negative note in 1995, when he committed a dangerous foul on then Alaska rookie Jeffrey Cariaso in the All-Filipino finals. The infraction led to his suspension for the rest of the season.

He made a brief comeback playing for the San Juan Knights in the now-defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association before his retirement.

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna 4031

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC)
(For supplies, materials, equipment, and services)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to submit bids for the following items:

Bulletin Board No.	Project Description	Project Cost	Approved Budget for the Contract	Bidding Fee
UPLB-BAC-2010-01	CONSTRUCTION OF ONE (1) UNIT DEPARTMENT STORE FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF DEVELOPMENT MATERIALS AND SERVICES AT UNIVERSITY TOWN CENTER	60,000.00	P50,000,000.00	P5,000.00

Interested parties may secure the Bidding Documents from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat Office, 2nd Floor, Gymnasium Road, UPLB, Los Baños. The bidding documents may also be downloaded either from PhilGEPS (PhilGEPS Bulletin Board, Category 1) or the UPLB website (www.uplb.edu.ph). Bidding fee shall be required from the interested bidders. Please refer to the Invitation to Bid for the complete list of eligibility requirements as well as the date of submission/opening of bids.

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

ACTIVITY	DATE	PLACE
1. Issuance of Bidding Documents	Within 14 calendar days from the date of publication of the ITB (per Annex 1)	BAC Secretariat Office, UPLB Gymnasium Road, Annex Office 2
2. Submission of Eligibility Requirements	On or before February 1, 2010, 4:00 p.m.	BAC Secretariat Office, UPLB Gymnasium Road, Annex Office 2
3. Pre-Bid Conference	January 25, 2010, Friday, 3:00 p.m.	BAC Secretariat Office, UPLB Gymnasium Road, Annex Office 2
4. Deadline/Opening of Bids	February 15, 2010, Monday, 1:30 p.m.	BAC Secretariat Office, UPLB Gymnasium Road, Annex Office 2

The UP BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare a failure of bidding, without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award in the manner which is most advantageous to the University. The University, however, reserves its obligation to withdraw bonus that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

Inquiries may be forwarded to Engr. Mark Jay Mendoza, Chair, BAC Secretariat at telephone nos. (049) 536-2400 loc. 109/536-2400, or (049) 536-2377 (DIRECT).

(Sgd.) ARSENIO N. BALISACAN
Chair, BAC

PNP reshuffles Metro police officials

By Nitz Calleja

JUST MONTHS AWAY FROM the May elections, the Philippine National Police has implemented a reshuffle which affected officials of the cities of Makati, Pasig, Caloocan and Manila, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Cedrick Train, Makati police chief, was transferred to the Police Security and Protection Group. He was replaced by Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendiola who used to be with the Intelligence Group in Camp Crame.

Senior Supt. George Ibanez took over the post of Senior Supt. Jose Santos of the Caloocan police while Senior Supt. Jessie Cardona replaced Senior Supt. Napoleon Villapaz as Pasig police chief.

The revamp was not the result of an extensive evaluation conducted on the performance of District Police Station heads and station commanders, Senior Supt. Roland Miranda, NCRPO spokesperson, said.

Earlier, NCRPO chief Director Roberto Rosales said Comelec chairman Jose Melo and Philippine National Police officials would take place should unanimous Bank the evaluation procedures scheduled this month.

"NCRPO did not have a hand in the relief orders. It came as a direction from PNP chief Jesus Verzosa," Miranda said, adding that the movements were part of the normal rotation of manpower and were not election-related.

Some affected officials, however, have filed a petition for injunction before the Manila Regional Trial Court. Rosales said. He refused to give more details.

A city police chief who asked for anonymity said the petition was "embarrassing" of an officer.

"I may tell my superiors not to assign me to a particular area but it is unethical to ask them not to pull me out from my current post," he explained.

Bomb threat disrupts work at Comelec offices

By Tina D. Santos

WORK AT THE COMMISSION ON Elections (Comelec) offices in Intramuros, Manila, was disrupted yesterday morning after an unidentified man called in a bomb threat.

Police said Virginia Reyes, a staff member of Comelec spokesperson and Education and Information Department (EID) chief James Jimenez, received a call at 9:55 a.m.

A man who, according to Reyes, sounded angry, said a bomb had been planted in the third floor over a disqualification case filed against a certain Mitchell.

Reyes said she even asked the caller where on the third floor the bomb had been placed and who the Mitchell he was referring to was but the caller immediately hung up the phone.

The caller also did not say whether he was referring to the third floor of the Shipping Center Building where the Comelec holds offices.

Police officials detailed at the Shipping Center Building were immediately alerted to the call and employees were asked to leave the area as bomb squad units from the Manila Police District's Explosives and Ordinance Division searched every floor.

Bomb experts, however, declared the area free of bombs at around 11 a.m. after the search failed to turn up an explosive.

Jimenez, meanwhile, said security has been tightened in both buildings with more security guards deployed to the area.

With dispatches from Alberto C. Alerta

MetroBriefs

Fire razes apartment

A fire of undetermined origin engulfed a two-story apartment building in Manila yesterday.

Senior Fire Officer 1 John Joseph Bongat of the Manila Fire Department said the blaze started around 10:40 a.m. at 1133 L. Guerrero St. near corner Padre Faura in Ermita. He said the fire began in a room occupied by a tenant identified as Norberto Lorenzo. He added that the fire, which reportedly was started by a former electrician who turned into an apartment consisting of several rooms. The area was reported to have been razed by the blaze which reached the fifth alarm, the second highest alert status used by the fire brigade. Around 12 units of fire trucks and three ambulances were deployed to the scene to help contain the fire and rescue residents. Bongat said the fire quickly spread to adjacent rooms as they were mostly made of light materials. Nine residents said they were able to escape from the burning apartment building. Fire investigators are still conducting an investigation to determine what caused the fire and the exact amount of damages to property.

Nina D. Santos

Torres High reunion

THE TORRES High School Class of 1981 will have its 30th Class Reunion on Jan. 23, at 6 p.m. at the Torres High Auditorium. All classmates of Torres High School, and to the guest speakers. For more information, please call Cez Prescillano at (0917) 554-7814/ Ed Cabrera at (0917) 450-0011/ Ben Cabrera at (0917) 450-0010/ Ben Cabrera at (0917) 450-0010/ Ben Cabrera at (0917) 450-0010

UN cuts back on probes

UNITED NATIONS—THE UN has cut back sharply on investigations into corruption and fraud within its ranks, shelving cases involving the possible theft or misuse of millions of dollars, an Associated Press review has found.

At least five major cases in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa are among the inquiries halted as the UN scaled back on self-policing over the past year.

The world body was rocked in the past decade when more than 2,300 companies from some 40 countries colluded with Saddam Hussein's regime to bilk $1.8 billion from a UN-administered oil-for-food program for Iraqi humanitarian relief.

In response, it established a special anti-corruption unit, the Procurement Task Force, in 2006 that over the next three years uncovered at least 20 other major schemes siphoning more than $1 billion in UN contracts and international aid.

But at the beginning of 2009, the UN shuttered the agency and divested its work to the Office of Internal Oversight Services' permanent investigation division.

Since then, the number of cases exposed, pursued or completed has dropped dramatically. AP

UN: Guatemala lawyer hired own hitmen

GUATEMALA CITY—A Guatemalan lawyer who uncovered the country's president of his murder in a video made before his death naturally contracted the hitmen to kill him, United Nations investigators announced on Tuesday.

Attorney Rodrigo Rosenberg announced cousins of his first wife to help him find a hitman to deal with an extortionist—when he really was orchestrating his own slaying amid severe personal problems, according to a special international group commissioned by the government.

"We have to conclude that it was Rodrigo Rosenberg himself who asked for help from ... intimate friends and said in essence 'I have an extortionist who is threatening me and I want to kill him,'" said Carlos Castresana, head of the probe into the May 10 killing. "They received his request and looked for someone capable."

Castresana said evidence shows Rosenberg bought new cellular phones—one to communicate with his killers and another to deliver threatening messages to his own personal phone.

Distress over personal problems led Rosenberg's suspicion that the government was behind the murder of two close friends appear to have motivated the Harvard-educated corporate lawyer, the investigators suggested.

"Why the extortion?" Castresana said. "We don't have all the answers. But we have a theory."

In the video, Rosenberg is seen looking into the camera and saying, "If you are watching this message, it is because I was assassinated by President Alvaro Colom."

The 45-year-old attorney, who served as assistant dean at a private university, claimed Colom's government was linked to corruption scandal in a government bank and said any attack on him would be an attempt to cover that up. Colom has denied any involvement in the killing.

Rosenberg's accusations were distributed to reporters on DVDs at his May 13 funeral and immediately set an already polarized country into a frenzy of protests, allegations of corruption and calls for Colom's resignation. AP

TRIGGERED—Garcia Simental, known as "El Teo" (center), is guarded by federal police as he is presented to the press in Mexico City on Jan. 12. —

Mexican authorities capture most wanted drug trafficker

TIJUANA—TEODORO "EL TEO" GARCIA Simental, one of Mexico's most brutal drug traffickers was arrested on Tuesday, in the second major victory for the government against the narcotics trade in a month.

Security forces captured Garcia in an early morning raid on an upscale residential area in the seaside city of La Paz, on the northwestern Baja California peninsula, officials said.

Later Tuesday, authorities presented Garcia to journalists in Mexico City.

Garcia "was one of the most wanted criminals by the governments of Mexico and the United States," said Genaro Noguera, an official with the federal police.

"El Teo' is under indictment in Mexico on five counts, including drug trafficking, racketeering, and homicide. He also could face other charges in the United States," the US Embassy in Mexico said in a statement praising the cooperation between the two countries.

Garcia is on a list of Mexico's 24 most-wanted drug traffickers, with a reward of up to 2.3 million dollars offered for his capture.

He is also blamed for a spike in particularly gruesome violence in the border city of Tijuana.

Another person, who was not identified, was also arrested in the raid early Tuesday, officials said.

"The case of several kidnapped ends up and on found the area surrounded by soldiers," local resident Mario Zamora told AFP.

The arrest is the second major victory for President Felipe Calderon's administration's crackdown on organized crime, after top drug lord Arturo Beltran Leyva was killed in a shootout with marines in a raid south of Mexico City on Dec. 16.

Calderon's administration has also touted the arrest of Arturo's less powerful brother, Carlos Beltran Leyva, on Dec. 30 in the drug-plagued northwestern state of Sinaloa, just two months after his brother's death.

Garcia was not as powerful or influential as Arturo Beltran Leyva but was infamous for his extreme violence.

Baja California authorities say Garcia broke off an alliance with the Tijuana, or Arellano Felix cartel in January 2008 after a bloody gunfight, and now backs Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman, head of the rival Sinaloa cartel and Mexico's most wanted man.

Garcia is blamed for a wave of attacks in Tijuana in recent years.

A hitman called "the song maker" last year confessed to murdering some 300 hundred bodies in acid for Garcia.

Garcia's then girlfriend was killed by death in 2008. Garcia allegedly went on a revenge killing spree, murdering 17 people in 31 hours. AFP

Americans split over Obama first year

WASHINGTON—A NEW SWEAP OF opinion polls shows American sharply divided on President Barack Obama's first year in office, as his ratings on key issues like health care and the economy hit new lows.

Polling also suggests independents' views are turning away from Obama as he nears the anniversary of his Jan. 20 inauguration—though in a sign of hope for his administration, he remains more popular than his policies.

In a new Quinnipiac University poll released on Wednesday, United States voters were split 45-45 on whether Obama's first year was a success or failure.

When voters were asked in a CNN/Opinion Research survey published on Tuesday to rate Obama's performance during a crisis-marred first year in the Oval Office, 48 percent judged it a failure, and 47 percent rate a success.

Obama's first year, after he accepted a challenging legacy from ex-president George W. Bush, has seen him battle the worst economic crisis in 70 years, juggle two wars and contend with a bombed-at Qaida terror attack on a US airliner on Christmas Day.

A CNN News poll released Obama's job approval rating at 46 percent, marking the first time he had polled below 50 percent in the survey.

The CNN poll meanwhile showed Obama's approval rating at 51 percent—but that was down three points in a month.

Quinnipiac had Obama's job approval-disapproval split at 45 percent for the first time.

"President Obama's report card from the American people in his first year is either a c-minus or a d," said Peter Brown, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute.

"He gets better grades on his personal qualities than his policies." In the Quinnipiac poll, there was a narrow margin among respondents, 35-37 percent on whether the US would have been better off had Obama's Republican opponent John McCain won last year's election.

The 56 percent job approval hasn't or is traditionally seen as a crucial one for presidents, reflecting their political standing and ability to attract support for their policies in Congress.

Those results suggested that one of Obama's prime goals, bridging political divides in the US, had failed during his first year of office—though the president's Democrats accuse opposition Republicans of sorial obstructions.

After a bitter year-long debate, Obama and Democrats in Congress are moving closer to passing a sweeping health care reform bill—but the polls show their efforts have entrenched a painful political gulf. AFP

US police set to probe 1939 murder case

CHICAGO—HE'S THE FATHER OF A MAN born whose name is familiar to anyone who has flown in and out of Chicago, and his death has been linked to one America's most notorious gangsters ever: Al Capone.

Now the police department could soon be ordered, at the request of an alderman, to take another look at the unsolved gangland-style 1939 slaying of a prominent businessman Edward J. O'Hare, a case the deputy chief who oversees the unit acknowledged on Tuesday is his colder than any other under investigation.

How much time or how many detectives will actually be assigned to the investigation is unclear, Deputy Chief Al Weysinger said. But while he recognizes the difficulties that come with a case dating back seven decades, he sounded like he's taking the task seriously.

"The Chicago Police Department doesn't close homicides," he said. "We will try to come to a resolution."

Still, Alderman Edward Burke isn't expecting much more from detectives than clearing all the file and looking into whether there is anything left to do with the case.

Capone, after all, has been dead for decades. And over on the off chance anyone remembered to the case is alive—a remote possibility given the life expectancy for males of the 1910s and 1920s—they'd be in their 90s.

"They're not going to waste a lot of time on something that happened in 1939," Burke said of police.

Instead, Burke says the exercise is a chance to shine light on one of the darkest chapters in the city's history, give recognition who helped bring down Capone—the credit he deserves and tell a story of a father's love for a son whose heroics a few years later in World War II prompted the city to name its busiest airport after him. AP

EXPERIENCE IT BEST
NOW SHOWING AT
AYALA MALLS CINEMAS
3D
BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Welcome to the country's one & only true private cinema.

Ayala Malls Cinemas' PRIVILEGE PASS

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casco

Obama wants record $708 billion for wars next year

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT Barack Obama will ask Congress for an additional $55 billion to fight unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq on top of a record $708 billion for the Defense Department next year, The Associated Press has learned—a request that could be an especially hard sell to some of the administration's Democratic allies.

OBAMA

The extra $55 billion in 2010 would mostly go toward the expansion of the war in Afghanistan. Obama ordered an extra 38,000 troops for that war as part of an overhaul of the war strategy late last year.

Military officials have suggested that the 2011 request would top $708 billion for the first time, but the precise figure has not been made public.

The administration also plans to tell Congress next month that its central military objectives for the next four years will include winning the current wars while preserving resources and that its core missions will include counterterrorism and counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

The administration's Quadrennial Defense Review, the main articulation of US military doctrine, is due to Congress on Feb. 1. Top military commanders were briefed on the document at the Pentagon on Monday and Tuesday. They also received a preview of the administration's budget plans through 2015.

The four-year review outlines six key mission areas and spells out capabilities and goals the Pentagon wants to develop. The plan lists drones used by unmanned aircraft missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan as a priority, with the goals of speeding up the purchases of new Reaper drones and expanding Predator and Reaper drone flights through 2015.

US officials outlined the coming requests as conditions of increasingly become the budget request will not be sent to Congress until late this month.

Obama's request for more war spending is likely to receive support in Capitol Hill, where Republicans will join moderate Democrats to pass the bill.

But the budget debate is also likely to expose a widening rift between Obama's administration and Democratic leaders, who have watched public opinion turn against the military campaign.

"The president's going to have to make his case," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., told reporters last month at her year-end briefing.

The 2010 budget contains about $128 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

That figure would rise to $139 billion next year under the proposals prepared for Congress.

The Pentagon projects that war funding would drop sharply in 2012, to $90 billion, and remain there through 2015. That is a calculation that the United States will save money from the withdrawal of troops in Iraq, as well as a prediction that the Afghanistan war will begin to wind down in the middle of 2011.

Obama has promised that US forces will begin to withdraw from Afghanistan in July 2011, but his defense advisers have let no time limit be the war.

The Pentagon projects that overall defense spending would be $643 billion in 2011, $682 billion in 2013, $640 billion in 2014, and $666 billion in 2015. Congress sets little store by such predictions, which typically have fallen short of actual requests and spending.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are expected to testify to Congress about the budget and the policy review in February.

The four-year policy statement is a more important statement of administration goals.

Iran: Israel, CIA killed scientist

TEHRAN—PARLIAMENT SPEAKER ALI Larijani, Iran's former chief nuclear negotiator, accused intelligence agents of the United States and Israel on Wednesday of plotting a bombing which killed a top atomic scientist.

"We had received clear information a few days before (the assassination) that the (intelligence) services of the Zionist regime, with the cooperation of the CIA, were working to carry out a terrorist act in Tehran," the official news agency quoted Larijani as saying.

Massoud Ali Mohammadi, a particle physics professor at prestigious Tehran University, was killed on Tuesday morning by a bomb strapped to a motorcycle in the capital's well-to-do northern suburbs.

"They (the Israeli and US intelligence agencies) might have thought that, in the face of concrete internal disputes, there was an opportunity to take this action and that they would cause friction among academics and harm the country's nuclear research work," Larijani added.

Student students and the volunteer Basij militia condemned the killing of Ali Mohammadi, who they described as "a Basij professor." But his murder appeared not a fair of academics backing opposition leader Mir Hussein Mousavi in the disputed June 12 presidential election, which gave President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a second term. AFP

Google threatens to quit China over censorship

SAN FRANCISCO—Internet giant Google Inc. has made a drastic threat to quit China, the world's biggest Internet market by users, after hackers accused human rights activists' e-mail accounts.

Google's announcement on Tuesday comes amid growing tensions between China and the United States over Internet freedoms, with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton set to announce a technology policy next week to help citizens around the world have access to an uncensored Web.

China has over 338 million Web surfers and analysts nearly overtake topping $1 billion.

Despite its others, anyone doing business there must adhere to strict Chinese censorship rules that ban discussion or display of pages on sensitive topics ranging from Tibetan independence to the banned Falun Gong spiritual movement.

Companies like Google and Microsoft, along with domestic giants Baidu and Sina, all adhere to such rules, though some files to speak publicly about them.

But in latest China crackdown, Google said it had uncovered a sophisticated attack on the email accounts of Chinese human rights activists using its Gmail service, and that more than 20 other companies were similarly attacked.

"These attacks and the surveillance they have uncovered—combined with attempts over the past year to further limit free speech on the Web—have led us to conclude that we should review the feasibility of our business operations in China," Google Chief Legal Officer David Drummond said in a statement.

"We recognize that this may well mean having to shut down Google.cn, and potentially our offices in China." China is one of the few markets where Google is not the lead, lagging Baidu which commands a 60 percent share of the Chinese Internet search market versus Google's 29 percent.

Shares of Google fell 1.1 percent in after-hours trading after the news than it might withdraw from China, while Baidu shares jumped 5.8 percent. Sina shares gained 1.3 percent.

"This is definitely a big surprise and very sad news for users in China because now we have fewer choices," said Edward Yu, chief executive of Beijing-based research firm Analysys.

"Emotionally speaking, this is negative for foreign players trying to develop in the Chinese market, but from a rational point of view, it is still to be seen whether Google pulls out."

China's tough stance on Web censorship has put it at odds with Western technology firms in recent years.

The latest dispute had its personal company makers against a Chinese government move on keeping pornography out of the hands of China's youth, although it believed the move involved censorship and invasion of privacy.

In June, Beijing ordered Google to block overseas sites with "vulgar" content from being accessible through the China-language versions of its search engine. Google said then that it met with Chinese government officials and was taking necessary steps to ensure search results on its Chinese site complied.

Google said the hackers in the recent attack had tried to break into Gmail accounts of Chinese human rights activists, but only managed to access two unidentified accounts, and could only see subject headings and other data such as when the account was created.

It said it was not clear who was the hackers tried to access from other companies, "nor which they were. Google said it was now notifying the other affected corporations, adding it was working with the US authorities.

A Google spokesperson said the company was still investigating the attack and would not say whether Google believed Chinese authorities were involved. Reuter

FORMER Alaska Governor and Vice Presidential candidate, Sarah Palin, leaves from Bill O' Reilly as she makes her first appearance on "The O' Reilly Factor" on Tuesday.

Palin combative in debut as Fox TV commentator

NEW YORK—REPUBLICAN former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin came out swinging—and surviving—in her debut as a commentator for Fox News television on Tuesday.

The conservative former Alaskan governor and potential 2012 White House candidate played up her tough, no-nonsense image in an interview with her new colleague, Fox's Bill O'Reilly.

Showing that wounds from her failed 2008 White House bid smuggled presidential candidate John McCain last year remain fresh, she angrily defended her performance during the campaign.

She said reports that she had been poorly prepared and was unable, for example, to tell the difference between South and North Korea was a "bunch of B.S. from leftwing and some of those." Sheis Schmidt was a top McCain adviser during the campaign and has since been scathingly critical of Palin.

And assessing the war against much of the US media, she accused "political establishment reporters" of trying to "gin up controversy and spin up gossip. The rest of America doesn't care about that kind of crap," in a jab at the political analysis she will bring to Fox, Palin told viewers of "The O'Reilly Factor" that President Barack Obama's declining poll numbers would only get worse. AFP

British gay mag wants toyboy of N. Ireland leader's wife on its cover

BELFAST—JEFF MCCAMBRIDGE THE YOUNG man whose flirtation with the political scandal engulfing Northern Ireland, is being lured by Britain's top gay magazine which wants him to pose in his cover boy.

Aged 19 at the time but now 21, the male proprietor's romance with lawmaker Iris Robinson, the 60-year-old wife of Northern Ireland's First Minister Peter Robinson, is earning him an unlikely fan base in the gay community.

Her alleged role in helping McCambley get the police licence has led to her husband stepping aside for six months in a bid to clear his name over the affair.

A Christian, Iris Robinson sparked controversy in 2008 when she told BBC radio she considered homosexuality an "abomination" and had met gays who had sought psychiatric counselling, "turned around and become heterosexual." The editor of Attitude, Britain's best-selling gay magazine, said they had been trying to contact McCambley.

"We would love to see him on the cover of Attitude. We think our readers would get sold for him," Matthew Todd said. "Most people think that would be fun," he told AFP.

"A lot of gay people are feeling grateful to him for exposing her.

"There's something very satisfying when somebody is being very pious and religious ... the fact that he's young and attractive brings it down to earth.

But he admitted: "I don't think it's likely that he'd want to be on the cover of Attitude ... we tried a few times and the phone rang off." Todd said there was "a lot of real anger" in the gay community over Iris Robinson's behaviour but now that she had been "humiliated" by her affair, the family had suffered enough.

On the Internet, more than 5,400 people joined a McCambley appreciation society on a social networking website. AFP

MCCAMBLEY — ROBINSON

Scandal hikes sales of 'Mrs. Robinson' song

BELFAST—THE EXTRAMARITAL affair embarked by Iris Robinson, the wife of Northern Ireland's First Minister, has inspired an internet campaign to push "Mrs. Robinson," the song from the film "The Graduate," to the top of the British pop charts.

The drive began after Robinson, 60, said last week she tried to kill herself last year following an affair with a then 19-year-old man that resembles the plot of Mike Nichols' Oscar-winning film.

A celebrity guidance played by a young Dustin Hoffman who seduced by the much-older Mrs Robinson played by Anne Bancroft in the 1967 movie which helped the Simon and Garfunkel song to number one in the United States pop charts a year later.

Fans get the iconic song Mrs. Robinson—made famous by the 1968 film The Graduate—to number one in next Sunday's chart in honor of Northern Ireland's disgraced first lady" the campaign page, hatched on the Facebook website, said.

The song contains the lyrics: "And Here's to you, Mrs. Robinson / Jesus loves you more than you will know" and "It's a little secret, just the Robinsons' affair."

Participants have to download the song from the Internet. A similar drive on Facebook, the world's No. 1 Internet social network, put United States top crucial band Rage Against The Machine on top of the Christmas chart but the 50,000 people backing "Mrs. Robinson" fifth anniversary shore of the war one million who supported that push.

Last week's download sales of the song "Mrs. Robinson" were up 1,200 percent in Northern Ireland on the week before, the Official Charts Company told AFP. Reuters, AFP

Yemeni al-Qaida cell leader killed in clash

SANAA—THE LEADER OF A Yemeni al-Qaida cell has been killed in clashes with Yemeni security forces, and two Yemeni soldiers were killed in an ambush elsewhere in the same province, Yemen's state news agency said on Wednesday.

In Yemen's north, at least 13 Yemeni Shiite rebels were killed in clashes with pro-government tribesmen and in Yemen security operations. Both Saudi Arabia and Yemen have stepped up efforts against the rebels in recent days.

United States-led efforts to battle militancy are focused on Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation, after a Yemen-based wing of al-Qaida said it was behind a failed Dec. 25 plot to bomb a US-bound airliner.

Yemen's state news agency quoted the governor of Yemen's Shabwa province as identifying the dead al-Qaida militant as Abdullah al-Mehdar, whose name had been surrounded by security forces late on Tuesday. Mehdar was reported to have led an al-Qaida cell in Shabwa, southeast of Sanaa.

A security official told Reuters that Mehdar died in a heavy exchange of gunfire overnight that partly destroyed his home, where he had been holed up with nine other militants thought to have escaped. Reuters

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Airport restrictions hurting Boracay tourism /B6

Editor Raul G. Manuela ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Martinez

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Cement firms vow to police own ranks /B3
■ RP sees record rice output of 18M tons in '10 /B6

Economic data point to gradual recovery

Gov't agency notes slower decline in leading index

By Reena F.W. Domingo

THE ECONOMY, GAUGED USING THE LEADING economic indicators (LEI) index, continued to slide for the sixth consecutive quarter in October to December, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board.

The NSCB said the composite LEI dropped further to -0.64. The lowest since it started contracting from 0.611 in the second quarter of 2008.

However, the decrease in the composite figure has slowed for the second consecutive quarter, which NSCB secretary general Romulo A. Virola said "somewhat confirm earlier signs of a gradual recovery of the economy from the global crisis."

The composite LEI relates to 11 components, namely, the consumer price index, electric energy consumption, currency exchange rate, hotel occupancy rate, money supply, number of new business incorporations, stock price index, terms of trade index, total merchandise imports, tourist arrivals, and wholesale price index.

The NSCB chief said the number of positive contributors has increased continually to seven from three in the first quarter of 2009.

"Starting with the largest positive contributor, there were consumer price index, money supply, electric energy consumption, tourist arrivals, total merchandise imports, number of new businesses, and wholesale price index," Virola said.

But he said despite the increase in the number of positive contributors, their contribution remained low at 39.1 percent from 52 percent in the third quarter.

Negative contributors, from the largest, were stock price index, terms of trade index, hotel occupancy rate and foreign exchange rate, and terms of trade index.

ECONOMIC B2

Gov't to bid Ilijan power contract on April 16

By Amy R. Remo

THE STATE-OWNED POWER sector assets and Liabilities Management Corp. is seeking investors who will manage the independent power producer administrator contract for the 1,200-megawatt Ilijan natural gas-fired power plant in Batangas.

According to bid documents, PSALM has scheduled the bidding for the contract on April 16.

Only prequalified investors who submitted letters of interest by Jan. 29 will be allowed to participate in the bidding process for the Ilijan facility management.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the bidding package, interested parties must execute a confidentiality agreement and an undertaking, as well as pay a non-refundable participation fee of $10,000. These should be accompanied by Mr. 3, PSALM added.

Bidding packages will be issued from Jan. 18 to Feb. 8. Prospective investors can conduct due diligence from Jan. 18 until two business days prior to the bid submission deadline. A pre-bid conference will also be held on Feb. 11.

A two-envelope bidding system will be adopted. Interested parties will be required to post a bid security worth $15 million in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit.

However, it was not certain if PSALM would bid out the Ilijan IPPA as a single contract or if it would break it to several smaller capacities.

"The committee reserves the right to divide the Ilijan capacity into two or more portions. For details of the appointment as administrator for the Ilijan capacity IPPA are contained in the bidding package," PSALM explained.

MORE B2

PDIC extends PBCom sale deadline to end-March

By Michelle V. Remo

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE Corp. has extended the deadline for shareholders to divest a 67 percent stake in Philippine Bank of Communications (PBCom) until the end of March this year.

"PBCom already has a financial adviser on the sale of the shares and they are already working out a deal [with potential investors] for the sale. They asked for an extension and we are giving it to them," PDIC president Jesus Head said.

The original deadline for PBCom shareholders to sell their stake was March last year. It was extended to December 2009, but bank representatives asked for more time to close a deal.

Mercantile Group serves as financial adviser to medium-sized PBCom.

Stockholders requested more time to close a deal

The shareholders must sell at least 67 percent of the bank. This will come from the 91-percent combined stake of the Lay family (32 percent), the Sidhu family (26 percent), and the Cheng family (26 percent).

The sale is tied to a P1.6-billion loan extended five years ago by PDIC to the medium-sized bank, which is now having financial troubles. As a requirement for the extension of the loan, shareholders must sell at least 67 percent of the bank to a new investor by March 2009.

PDIC has especial power of attorney (SPA) that allows it to enforce the sale of the PBCom shares if the bank's shareholders would fail to divest within the prescribed period.

The business earlier reported that PBCom was keen on selling the stake to avoid complying with the requirements of PDIC. PBCom director Antonio Lee was earlier quoted as saying that the bank's shareholders were amenable to divesting their stakes.

In 2006, the Sidhu and Cheng families offered their combined 300.6 million shares of stock equivalent to a 50-percent interest in PBCom to Pakistan Bank of Habib Bay (Pakistan) was reported to have made a tender offer to buy the shares in PBCom, including those of the Lay family, but the sale did not push through due to pricing issues.

Gov't to bid . . .

From page B1

PSALM president Jose Ibazeta earlier said they were considering to break up the management of the associated capacity for the Ilijan facility into several smaller contracts and offer them to a number of prospective firms.

Ibazeta explained that the measure to prevent market dominance by a single player like it was also intended to make the facility financially viable since the revenue for the Ilijan plant, with its huge capacity, would have been too expensive for a single company to acquire.

However, Korea Electric Power Corp. (Kepco), which plans to bid for the Ilijan 89% contract, expressed reservations about the plan to break up the contract, stressing that this would pose potential problems over the long-run.

Completed in 2002, the Ilijan power plant is operated by Kepco through a build-operate-transfer contract that will expire in 2022. It draws natural gas from Shell Exploration BV's Malampaya deep-water gas-to-power project.

Economic . . .

From page B1

"The negative contribution still outweigh the positive contributions, accounting for 85.5-percent share of total contribution," Ureta said.

Last November, an International Monetary Fund team on a regular visit to the country said economic recovery in the Philippines was "particularly noteworthy" along with that of Indonesia.

IMF mission chief S Hoong Lee said that, considering improvements in the country's LEIs, the multilateral agency now sees full-year growth in Philippine gross domestic product at 1.3 percent, up from a previous forecast of one percent.

Also, Lee said the growth of domestic output would accelerate further to 3.2-percent in 2011, after an improvement from a previous estimate of 3.2 percent.

Stocks end lower

From page B1

Gains by Bank of the Philippine Islands, Ayala Corp. and Lopez's Consolidated Mining Co. cushioned the stock market's decline.

Doris C. Dumlao

Semirara OKs rights offering

By Arry R. Reyes

SEMIRARA MINING CORP. AND ITS BOARD of directors has approved the company's proposed stock rights offering in order to obtain up to P12.5 million to help fund its acquisition activities.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Semirara said proceeds from the offering are intended to partially finance the acquisition of the 600-megawatt (MW) Calaca coal-fired power plant in Batangas, through its wholly owned subsidiary, SEM-Calaca Power Corp.

The company's total investment for the Calaca facility are expected to reach $403.8 million, which included the acquisition cost of $361.7 million. The remaining $121.89 million had been allocated for the rehabilitation and working capital requirements of the power plant.

In December last year, Semirara paid the state-owned Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. $143.8 million as down payment for the coal facility.

SMC Holdings, which owns 56 percent of Semirara, said in July this year the bidding for the Batangas power facility.

Meanwhile, Semirara explained in the disclosure that the unclassified common shares (rights shares) have a par value of P1 each and will be issued from the existing authorized capital stock.

Are you a graduate of nursing, physical therapy, medical technology, or medicine?

Expand your career options and be in-demand LOCALLY and ABROAD.

Be a successful MEDICAL CODER AND BILLER!

Learn from an expert educator and practitioner from the United States.

Medical Transcription Industry Association of the Philippines, Inc.

MEDICAL CODING & BILLING TRAINING

Patterned after ICD-10-CM & PCS, AAPC CPC & Philippine Trade Training Center Medical Office

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics cites that job prospects in the Medical Records and Health Information Technology are VERY GOOD through year 2016.

Why You Should Attend
- Be exposed to a new occupation that is highly in demand locally and abroad.
- Be aware of a new business opportunity for existing Medical Transcription companies and training centers.

Who Should Attend
- New graduates or medical professionals looking for a lucrative career.
- Entrepreneurs and businessmen planning to venture in medical coding and billing.
- Educators interested in teaching medical coding and billing as part of school curriculum in the future.
- Educators teaching allied medical courses. Medical professionals planning to migrate in the US.

Pre-Qualification:

Participants must be a graduate of Allied Medical courses with knowledge on Anatomy & Physiology.

TRAINING FEE	MTAIP MEMBER	NON-MEMBER
Early bird rate (registration before 31 January 2010)	P 23,080	P 24,200
Regular rate	P 27,080	P 36,000

Visit: **www.mtiapi.com**

Contact the DL Media Focus International Inc.,
17th Flr. Rm. G Burgundy Corporate Tower
252 San. Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City
Tel nos. **(632) 889-7763 | 864-0559 | 864-0557 | Telefax (632) 884-4407**
Email: **events@mediafocus.com.ph**
info@mtiapi.com

REGISTER NOW. LIMITED SEATS ONLY!

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

CURRENCIES

Ifad, European Commission, RP come together to raise rice output

By Amy R. Remo

ROME-BASED INTERNATIONAL FUND for Agricultural Development, European Commission and the Philippine government are providing $62.24 million (roughly P3.09 billion) to help Philippines meet supply and irrigation projects in rice-producing provinces.

Ivana F. E. Jarvis, Ifad country program manager for Asia and the Pacific division, said these projects would be implemented under the Rapid Food Production Enhancement Programme (RaFPEP), to help the country achieve rice self-sufficiency by 2013.

Jarvis said the goal of the RaFPEP was to "reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of paddy farming households in participating ranked and irrigated areas in selected provinces under the Rice Self Sufficiency Plan 2009-2013."

The RaFPEP is also expected to increase rice paddy production in rainfed and irrigated areas, he added.

According to Jarvis, the seven-year program will be implemented through two subprojects, namely the Rapid Food Supply Processing Project (RaFSPP) and the Irrigated Rice Production Enhancement Project (IRPEP).

He disclosed that the RaFSPP had an allocation of $34.3 million while the remaining $25.74 million would be for the IRPEP. Part of the amount would be in loans and others, in grants.

The IRPEP, which will be implemented over the next five years, targets to improve the productivity and production of irrigated paddy on selected communal irrigation systems in Regions 8 and 10 through a number of projects.

Since 1978, Ifad has invested $168.8 million to fund 12 projects related to agricultural development in the Philippines.

Cement firms vow to police own ranks

By Abigail L. Ho

AMID THREATS OF BEING slapped with profiteering charges, the local cement industry has committed to police its own ranks, saying the players themselves will work to ensure that there will be no hoarding or overpricing of the product.

In a statement, the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines said it would support the Department of Trade and Industry in its efforts to stabilize cement prices in the country by cracking down on abusive industry players.

"Although the supply and prices of cement are normalizing, Cemap will continue to work with DTI to help ensure adequate supply and reasonable prices for cement. Meanwhile, many retailers have committed to police their own ranks to achieve the same objectives," said Cemap president Ernesto Ordoñez.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila earlier threatened to file profiteering charges against cement manufacturers, distributors, and retailers caught overpricing or hoarding.

During its market inspections late last year and early this year, the DTI issued notices of violation to cement selling cement at more than the suggested retail price range of P205-P210 per 40-kilogram bag.

Motives of the supply were likewise hinted to establishments that said they had no cement to sell.

To stop players in the cement supply chain from either overpricing or hoarding, the DTI a few days ago published a price guide to major breadwinners.

Ordoñez said, however, that while this price guide was a realistic indicator of a commodity's worth, it might also send wrong signals to consumers.

He explained that in some cases, the DTI published prices were different from those submitted by the manufacturers, else, the price guide could give consumers the impression that one manufacturer was being favored to sell cement in a spoof or sell at a lower price than another company, contradicting the principle of equal treatment for similar products.

Some of the dealer and retailer margins allowed for one company could also be lower than another firm selling the same product, resulting in lower retail prices, he said.

Bulacan sheriff auctions 24% of Vitarich shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

A 24-PERCENT STAKE IN PUBLICLY LISTED poultry firm Vitarich Corp., which was foreclosed by Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., has been sold.

The Provincial Sheriff of Bulacan conducted the auction sale of 97.01 million shares mortgaged to Metrobank last Jan. 7. Vitarich told the Philippine Stock Exchange (yesterday, adding that it found out about the sale only last Jan. 12.

Based on the P8.41 closing price of Vitarich during the auction date, the stash was worth about P19 million.

These shares were owned by Sarmiento Management Corp., McIntyre Corp., Sarphil Corp., Lil Sarmiento and Co. Inc. and Lui M. Sarmiento.

No other details of the sale were provided, however, including who bought the shares.

Vitarich, which is currently undergoing a court-assisted corporate rehabilitation, has a market capitalization of P436 million.

It is engaged in the formulation, production, storage and marketing of various animal and aqua feeds.

One of its subsidiaries is Gromax Inc., which is engaged in the manufacture and distribution of animal health and nutrition al products.

The approval of the rehabilitation plan in 2007 allowed the restructuring of the entire of its loans, including the extension of payment terms to 15 years and the reduction in interest rates.

The amortized cost of the loan amounted to P1.61 billion as of the date of approval of the rehabilitation plan.

Based on the company's financial statements, several creditor banks transferred their respective rights, titles and interests over the loan obligation of the company (amounting to P1.358 billion) to various assignees. Those assignees have not yet entered into any amendatory agreement with the company.

In the first nine months of 2009, Vitarich posted a net income of P20.5 million, a turnaround from the P25.2 million net loss the previous year. This was attributed to the continuous decline in the cost of major raw materials and significantly lower overhead and operating expenses.

Cost of goods sold decreased by almost 12 percent during the 2009 period as compared to the same period in 2008. Net sales reached P2.1 billion from January to September, which is close to the previous year's level.

For the third quarter alone, the company posted a net income of P13.9 million versus a net loss of P8.4 million in 2008. Increased sales stood at P692.4 million during the third quarter of 2009, down by 6 percent over the previous year.

BUSINESS

RP sees record rice output of 18M tons in '10

El Niño not expected to adversely affect production

THE COUNTRY'S UNMILLED RICE output is likely to rise to a record level this year, with an ongoing dry spell expected to be mild, suggesting the world's biggest rice buyer may not need to import more grains.

The government purchased more than 2.2 million tons of rice from local traders last year, including overdue, and officials have said supplies for 2010 are adequate, hastening any major rebating.

"What we have is a mild El Niño, and a mild El Niño is our experience is good for rice," Fiters Maluhuman, program director for rice at the Department of Agriculture, yesterday told reporters. "I don't think production will be affected."

El Niño is an abnormal warming of waters in the equatorial Pacific, which may wreak havoc in global weather patterns, reportedly aroused the Asia-Pacific region.

The weather phenomenon has been linked to the weak monsoon that hit rice areas in India, and a US grocery-store agency said last week a potentially damaging El Niño anomaly would last into the early summer of 2010.

Rice production shrank 24 percent in the last severe El Niño episode that hit the Philippines in 1998.

Several producers in the country have already experienced below-normal rainfall in the past three to four months, including rice-growing areas of Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Benguet, Pangasinan, and Quezon, according to the latest El Niño advisory from the weather bureau.

Maluhuman said public output this year would likely reach at least 17.4 million tons, a record, and could go up to more than 18 million tons under the proposed 2010 budget bill, which provides for increased spending on irrigation facilities and subsidies for farm inputs.

The 2010 national spending bill, up 8 percent at P1.541 trillion ($33 billion), has been approved by Congress, but is yet to be signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Maluhuman said the lower end of the expected rice production estimate this year assumes the national spending budget would not be increased from 2009.

The country lost 1.3 million tons of paddy rice following three strong typhoons in September and October, prompting it to go to the market early to boost its rice stocks. *Reuters*

Airport restrictions hurting Boracay tourism

By Dasiro L. Luna

(First of two parts)

FLYING TO THE WORLD-FAMOUS Boracay Island for a weekend getaway to one of its many resorts used to be a fast, convenient and affordable experience for hundreds of thousands of foreign and local tourists each year.

Up until the third quarter of last year, visitors could fly from Manila to nearby Caticlan airport in as little as 50 minutes, take a short ferry ride to the island's white sand beaches, and check into a hotel room within an hour and a half of leaving the metropolis.

All this changed when aviation authorities imposed flight restrictions on Caticlan airport after a series of aircraft accidents and "near misses." That left only high-end niche carrier Southeast Asian Airlines as the sole operator in the gateway of Boracay.

More affordable flights operated by SEA Express, Cebu Pacific and Zest Air—all of which charged cheaper fares—had to be diverted to Kalibo Airport which is a two-hour land trip away from Caticlan.

"The effects of this flight diversions really hit the local tourism industry badly," said Boi Gumaru, who is the chief operating officer of Boracay's operating Fairways and Bluewaters Resort Hotel and Boracay Club.

"At one point, [reservation] cancellations [for local resort hotels] reached as high as 70 percent," he added. "We were all affected."

In an interview with the business, Gumaru explained that a large number of tourists who visit Boracay Island do so during weekends, flying in on Friday afternoons or Saturday mornings, and returning to Manila or Cebu on Sunday afternoons.

The limited operations of Caticlan airport—which forced most airlines to fly tourists in via Kalibo—had turned off many potential travellers, putting a dampener on the island's multimillion-peso tourism industry.

"Time is precious for weekend travelers," Gumaru said. "They don't want to spend half of Saturday getting to Boracay and half of Sunday getting out of Boracay."

"Flight cuts it has become really inconvenient for people to come to Boracay especially if they fly in via Kalibo," he said, pointing to the approaching peak summer travel season. "We need Caticlan to resume operations to restore, or even improve, tourist traffic."

Over the long term, what is needed is for Caticlan airport's 900-meter runway to be extended to at least 1,800 meters for it to be able to accommodate the Airbus A320 aircraft.

For the short term, a 30-meter-high hill on one end of the runway has to be reduced to size. According to the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap), the hill prevents larger turboprop aircraft from flying in and out of the airport.

The challenge was taken up by the Caticlan International Airport Development Corp. (Caidc), a consortium majority-owned by businessman George Ty, to remove obstacles known for bringing the McDonald's fastfood chain to the country.

With a P2.5-billion bid, Caidc secured a 25-year build-operate-transfer (BOT) deal to extend the runway and build a new terminal for the airport.

Recently, however, the deal has come under intense attack from critics who claim that the airport expansion will adversely affect the environment on Boracay Island, which is separated from Caticlan by a deep channel.

In particular, critics of the deal have protested to the media on environment-related issues claimed that the development plan would eventually cause Boracay's white sand beaches to be eroded.

In several interviews made with local stakeholders, however, southern tourism has emerged for the opponents of the Caticlan airport expansion project, they speculated.

"There's another group that's pushing for the development of an international airport in Caticlan [instead," said Aklan lawmaker Florencio Miraflores. "It's just a proposal [at this point], but it's being aggressively marketed as an alternative [project]."

Along with other local officials, Miraflores believes that business—and not the environment—is the root of the opposition to the Caticlan airport expansion. (To be concluded.)

A PHILIPPINE Airbus craft arrives at the Caticlan Airport in Aklan. A string of "near misses" forced aviation authorities to close the airport to certain types of craft. ELVIN BARRIOS

DTI presses charges against 800 businesses

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY last year slapped administrative charges on more than 800 business establishments all over the country, mostly for taking advantage of consumers during calamity periods.

Trade Assistant Secretary Angel Peluyo said that of the nationwide total, 239 were filed against businesses in the Caticlan Capital Region. The figure was more than seven times the number of cases filed in the region in 2008.

"Two-of-three are still being heard at the Court of Appeals, namely Arma and Rosemoc. The two appliance stores were apprehended for employing deceptive and unfair sales practices," she said in a statement. "We hope that bringing to court these two establishments will [send] a message to other unscrupulous businessmen in Metro Iloilo from engaging in nefarious acts."

In 2009, the DTI monitored more than 194,000 business establishments nationwide via the agency's regional and provincial offices, as well as consumer welfare desks located at accredited business establishments.

These offices and help desks received more than 34,000 consumer complaints, 90 percent of which were resolved.

According to DTI data, a third of the establishments were penalized due to failure to comply with the Standards Law. This violation led the DTI to blacklist eight importers, prohibiting them from doing business with the Bureau of Customs.

Some 1,000 were also charged for violating the DTI's mandated price ceiling, which was imposed following the onslaught of Tropical Storm Ondoy.

The DTI caught 228 establishments violating this particular mandate, more than half of which came from the NCR.

According to the DTI, fines for administrative cases ranged from P5,000 to P1 million.

Napocor gets ₱4B in bridge financing from Land Bank

By Amy R. Remo

STATE-OWNED NATIONAL POWER Corp. has secured a bridge loan worth P4 billion from the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Napocor president Froilan A. Tampinco said the money from would not part of the loan to finance the operations of its Small Power Utilities Group (Spug).

Spug is Napocor's missionary electrification arm, providing electricity to remote islands and fire-fang, island barangays that are not connected to any of the main grids.

The government, through Napocor, subsidizes the cost of power in Spug to the tune of about P9 billion a year.

The NPC-Spug currently operates 264 generating units with a total projected capacity of about 120 megawatts (MW).

It serves 78 island grids and eight island grids providing electricity to 42 municipalities consisting of 39 electric cooperatives and three local government units.

Tampinco also said that Napocor was considering using part of the loan proceeds to fund the proposed two-year power contingency plan.

This year, Tampinco had said that Napocor planned to raise the P77 billion from the local market, either through issuance shares or bond issues.

The amount forms part of the P96-billion estimated capital expenditures covering the years 2009 to 2018. About P5 billion of the total capex is expected to be earmarked for generation projects in existing areas while another P1.5 billion will be used to fund projects in new areas.

According to Tampinco, Napocor has been exploring different ways to finance its Spug operations, especially since its revenue sources had been significantly affected by the implementation of state-owned power generation assets and independent power producers.

Deposit insurance fund up 7% to P65B

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEPOSIT INSURANCE FUND, whose regulators get the sharpest in terms claims involving bank closures, rose 7 percent to P65 billion by the end of 2009.

The growth of the DIF from P60.5 billion by the end of 2008 came about despite the government's partial settlement of claims of depositors of the 12 rural banks belonging to the Legacy Group of Cebu Delos Angeles.

The fund is managed by state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC).

The Legacy banks were ordered closed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) in December 2008 allegedly for engaging in unsafe and unsound banking practices. Officers of the banks and the Legacy Group were accused of stealing deposits.

PDIC president Jose Negrales said final action to release audit processes, the deposit insurer determined that the amount of liabilities it would need to pay depositors of Legacy-owned banks stood at P11 billion.

Of that amount, Negrales said, PDIC has already settled P5 billion. PDIC intends to settle the balance within the first quarter of this year. He explained that before sending a claim, PDIC has to make sure the claimant is the real owner of the bank account.

"We have to make sure we only pay valid deposit claims," Negrales said.

The deposit insurer said its P5 billion in expenses last year to partially settle claims of Legacy bank depositors was more than offset by its income from assessment fees and from investments, which include placements in foreign fixed-income securities.

Negrales said PDIC generated about P8 billion from assessment fees alone. These are the insurance premiums collected by the deposit insurer from member banks.

Earlier, PDIC asked the BSP for a P10-billion loan to fund its pay the claims of depositors of Legacy-owned banks.

Although the BSP was more than enough to cover the claims of depositors of the Legacy banks and other institutions closed by the BSP last year, PDIC still preferred to tap a loan payable within the medium term, Negrales said.

It would be best to ensure that the DIF has enough cash to meet unexpected deposit settlement requirements, he explained.

But the BSP thumbed down the loan application of PDIC, citing the solidarity of the DIF.

Negrales said that so far, given the increase in the DIF in 2009, there was no threat to the capability of PDIC to service deposit claims.

The new charter of PDIC, enacted last year, allows the deposit insurer to sell its own bonds to raise funds to meet deposit settlement requirements.

Negrales said PDIC welcomed the amendment in the charter, saying this would give the deposit insurer alternative sources of funding. Still, PDIC has no need to float bonds to beef up the fund, he said.

Gov't sets deadline for Japan property development deal

By Ronnel W. Domingo

RAIL ESTATE FIRMS HOPING TO LEASE the Philippine government's Fujimi property to Tokyo have until Feb. 8 to submit proposals for the development of the high-end property.

A document showed to reporters so as to indicate that the government's bids and award committee (BAC) is expected to name the chosen developer on the same day.

If the process goes according to plan, the BAC would greenlight on Feb. 15 a service development agreement on the 50-year lease of the Fujimi property.

In December, Finance Undersecretary Emilia V. Sales said the government shifted to a negotiated development of the Fujimi property after competitive bidding for the lease had failed.

Sales, who chairs the Department of Finance privatization office's BAC, began, said bids from three Japanese firms failed to meet the committee's requirements.

She said that, aside from the three firms, two more had expressed interest on the property.

The Fujimi property is one of three big ticket items that were supposed to be privatized in 2009. But the government, hoping for better deals, decided to defer the lease to 2010.

The other two state assets are the Food Terminal Inc. property in Taguig City and the government's shares in PNOC Exploration Corp.

Together, the three accounted for bulk of the government's P30-billion privatization program last year.

Proceeds from privatization are badly needed as the government again is expected to spend some P300 billion over its budget.

Also, the National Historical Institute has informed the committee that the Fujimi property is not a protected historical site and, thus, does not need DOT permission for any possible alterations, Sales said.

Within days of the BAC's announcement to postpone the bidding, a group asked the Supreme Court to stop the proceeding.

Former Ambassador Asst F Lazcó Pe Sen, Agaflora Planters Ir and the Philippine Ambassadors Foundation Inc. sought the high court's help to stop the bidding, particularly because of a reported plan to demolish a historical landmark on the property.

The Fujimi property is among eight properties in Japan that the Philippines acquired after World War II as part of reparations.

Fujimi is located in the commercial and residential district of Chiyoda, where the Imperial Palace and other Japanese government institutions are located.

LIFESTYLE Food

POST-HOLIDAY ATONEMENT

'Manggang hilaw' with baby 'dilis' and other salads–to pay for 'holiday sins'

Text and photos
by Jake Maximo
Contributor

WITH THE ONSET OF THE New Year comes the usual promise to exercise and eat healthier. This is no arcane for one's vise during the Christmas pigging out. And guess what, gyms are usually jampacked with members, and the waiting time to use the treadmill has become longer than the cancel.

Speaking of healthier food, salad is usually the top-of-mind since it's packed with fiber and has less calories, depending on one's preferred dressing. Salads are actually the easiest meals to prepare; one just needs the freshest vegetables plus a host of other condiments ranging from simple tomatoes to the oh-so-hard-to-find truffles.

For me, the best salad I've tried so far has lechon kawali as toppings on a bed of pears, a concoction by Budji Layug and Kai

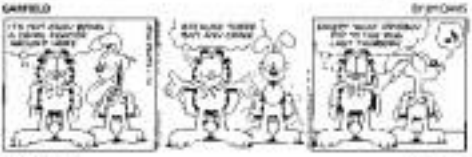
TOKUNNE'S Sizzling Chicken Salad, with grapes and mangoes

Salads are packed with fiber and have less calories

GODIVA Skin Station
New Year, New You!
FOR YOUR FACE
DIAMOND PEEL + FACIAL EXPRESS
₱1,388
NEW!
DIAMOND PEEL + COLLAGEN MASK
₱988
FOR YOUR BODY
THERMASCAPE BUTT LIFT + BODY FIRM
₱14,500
NEW!
EC CARBOXYTHERAPY
₱10,000

MEGA DENIM SALE
up to 70%OFF
MEGATRADE HALL 2 / JANUARY 15 -17
H2OURSPECIAL 10am-12nn
SM 5X MORE POINTS
when you present your SM Advantage, SM Prestige or BDO Rewards card with every denim purchase from 10am - 12nn
MEGAMALL
SM DEPARTMENT STORE

GARFIELD



A. LIPAK

PUGAD BABOY

DICK TRACY

LOWHANGTS

JAMES BOND

ERMAE COMEDY

BABY BLUES

TULOOK

BEN

ATOMIC AND WEEDY

KIDO MACHINE

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

THIS WEEK TODAY You are passionate about your beliefs, and you won't hesitate to pursue your causes in the way you are apt to accept. Obstacles and setbacks will not deter you. But still, use your persuasive, but stronger powers to advantage! Tell you something you've been involved with for about now, you can ask financial or and to ardent to make room for something new.

Birthdate of Hector Secret, actor. Tips Sonsong, actress. Albert Limbertson, Newfoundland/Newspaper.

ARIES (March 21 to April 20) Today's New Moon is the perfect time for you to think about your life direction in general. Are you heading in the direction you want to go?

TAURUS (April 21 to May 20) A little silly fulfilled or romantic? Whatever it is, you can get that will help you in love job or career, or romantic one. Be in control now? Today is the best day to consider this possibility.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) What do your relationships by the path to your life? It's good to be balancing a steady, ongoing jobs to pursue your dials. Perhaps you need to define involved in short-lifeand prosperity.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) How can you live or prove your personalities or close friendships? This is the only Near Moon of your life, when you are excellent chance for "a new beginning" in this area.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Can you think of ways to improve your job? Have you the your job or love your feel about your job? The New Moon makes today a great day to make improvements.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) It's important to have a healthy balance in your life. Do you have a good balance between play, fun and recreation versus your work, duties and responsibilities?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Today's New Moon is a chance to make resolutions. Today's New Moon is the time to think about how to improve your home and your family relationships.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Are you clear in your communication skills with others? Do you need help, or are you just waiting for your chance to talk? Think about this.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) What is your relationship to money? Do you have a healthy attitude to money? Do you have enough money? Do you spend money impulsively?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Today, the only New Moon in your sign all year is taking place. This is the perfect opportunity to think about personal growth.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Do you take enough knowledge by simple movements of physical to restore and replenish your state of mind? If you are ready to ignore this in your busy, hectic lives.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Do you hang out with quality people? Those want to have more friends, the secret is are you for friends?

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dan Snaps

			1		3	6		
		1		2			3	
2				4				
1		7					2	
	2						7	
4						9		3
			4				8	
	3			6			1	
		6	3		9			

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

2	4	7	3	1	9	6	8	5
3	8	6	5	2	7	9	1	4
1	9	5	8	6	4	3	2	7
5	2	4	7	9	8	1	3	6
8	1	3	6	4	5	2	7	9
6	7	9	2	3	1	5	4	8
9	6	1	4	7	5	8	5	2
7	5	2	1	8	6	4	9	3
4	3	8	9	5	2	7	6	1

How would you like 'barako,' 'salabat,' 'churros' and 'guinomis' as ice cream flavors?

By Ivana C. Perez

YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN GOOD company when you see several chefs who can talk for hours about good food, and how to handle excess baggage in the airport.

Chefs J Gamboa of Cebuda, Rolando Laudico of Bistro Filipino, Sau del Rosario of Cheftini Studios and Ariel Manuel of Late Dads Café and Brasserie tell us how they spend their holidays, how they came up with their choice flavors for the Selecta Gold Series, and what kind of Filipino ice cream flavors they still want to do.

Manuel, team captain of the international award-winning Les Toques, is the latest chef to create a Gold Series flavor—Vanilla Almond, which has loads of chunky roasted almonds and thick caramel ribbons on velvety vanilla ice cream.

"Vanilla is my first choice because it is very versatile," Manuel recently said over lunch at Late Dads Café in Manila.

Selecta earlier launched three gold series flavors—Gamboa's Berry Blueberry with French vanilla ice cream and plump, non-ripened strawberries; Laudico's Chocolate Truffles, which has a dark chocolate taste but still has that creamy, melt-in-your-mouth feel; and Del Rosario's Hazelnut Heaven with moist cubes of fudge brownies thrown in rich chocolate ice cream with swirls of ground hazelnut paste.

The earlier flavors were such a hit that Selecta came up with Vanilla Almond. The ice cream comes in two sizes, a tumbler and a tub which costs around P180+ and P300+, respectively. The flavors can pass off as gourmet ice cream, and with such quality can rival imported brands.

Affordable indulgence

With rich chocolate fudge, choice strawberries and yummy almonds with every bite, even pricing isn't a problem with the chefs!

"Oh yes," Laudico laughs. "They used to say, 'Mahal 'yan,' 'Di ambot sa budget,' 'Over sa normal.' But there's always the compromise," he says.

"They just gave up on us, parang sige na nga…" Gamboa said, laughing.

"The quality is there. You'll notice that unlike the regular ice cream, the syrup doesn't stay at the bottom of the container; that means are used good cream," Laudico adds.

Amid all the hard work part of the chefs can now be seen featured in TV ads and big banners in an for an Boracay.

People raved about their creations on blogs and random online posts.

They also serve samples of their flavors to their restaurants. Guests recognize them from the ads, and perks come with being celebrity chefs.

"I was in the airport and I had excess baggage. The person asked, 'Sir, kaya ba yung isasi (referring to Laudico, who type)' Sir (that's, Sau)? na ako (emphasis) Ayo 32 kilos yung sa akin, eh 25 lang ang allowed. Dali! sipsip, okay na 'yan, sir," Del Rosario said, laughing.

The "E" chefs have arrived, thanks to the popular ice cream brand. And sales picked up over the holidays when people were craving for something yield.

"Regular size of the roll ice cream has the same calories, maybe even more because of emulsifiers. If you are having calories, might as well have calories from good stuff," chef Laudico said.

Holidays were the busiest season for these chefs and most of them spent Dec. 24 in the kitchen.

"We prepare other people's Noche Buena, but we make sure we're closed on Christmas Eve so that the staff would have time for their families," Laudico said.

Filipino flavors

If viewers would ask these chefs the next ice cream flavor, what would it be? They were unanimous—they would create something Filipino, an ice cream with local flavor.

"I'll probably do something like barako, churros, white chocolate ambon," Laudico says.

"Guinomis flavor sounds good, with pasanse and gelatin," Gamboa says.

Del Rosario would go for "something like jackfruit sans rival," while Manuel would like to make mango macapuno ice cream.

The chefs regard the successful Gold Series launch as a step to elevate Filipino cuisine and bring pride to Filipino chefs as well.

CHEF Ariel Manuel's chocolate mousse with berries, orange slices, walnuts and scoops of Selecta Gold Vanilla Almond ice cream

CHEFS Rolando Laudico of Bistro Filipino, Ariel Manuel of Late Dads, J Gamboa of Cebuda and Sau del Rosario of Cheftini enjoy a bite of Selecta Vanilla Almond—the latest addition to the Gold Series collection.

VANILLA Almond ice cream on caramel sauce with roast cashew

Winners of Doreen Fernandez food writing tilt

THE DOREEN GAMBOA FERNANDEZ FOOD WRITing Award committee announced the winners of the 2009 competition with native cookies or *kakanin* as theme.

Violeta de Guzman won first place for her piece "In Search of the Perfect Unoy." De Guzman won also last year's first place winner.

An interesting student, Hershel Tan, won second place for her essay on bonguillo entitled "The Bread of Angels."

Jennifer Pena, a local communications director, won third place for her "Operacion Siapit Bakwit," a story of one chef's mission to save three traditional Bisaya cookies from extinction—*masa podrida*, *cosonillo* and *galeria*.

Honorable Mention awards were also given to Elmer Nedrevida for "Binuelos Hunajule" and Cheryl Chan Nolasco for "Bangus."

Winners' prizes include cash from donations to the DGF Awards and books from Anvil Publishing and Fully Booked. Sponsors of the DGF Awards are the Heritage Boardwalk, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Discovery Suites and Oakwood Hotel.

CENTER FOR ASIAN CULINARY STUDIES

455 P. Guevarra St., San Juan City, Philippines, 1500

Tel. Nos.: 725-8326 / 725-5608

www.cacachef.com • Email: cac@cacachef.com

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2010

Garden show promotes climate change awareness

TO PROMOTE AWARENESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE, the Philippine Horticultural Society Inc. in cooperation with the MMDF headed by Chito Roxas will present a flower and garden show dubbed "Eco 2010, It's a Green World after All."

To be formally opened by Philippine Daily Inquirer editor-in-chief Letty Jimenez Magsanoc, Lifestyle editor Miller Manrique Mamaradlo and Philippine Star Entertainment editor Cristina Pastor of Manila Bulletin, the show will be held Jan. 29-Feb. 8 at Manila Seedling Bank, Elliptical corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Here, 2000 is composed of three sections. The exhibits of landscape and individual collection of plants that will make our world green. Interiors demonstrations by experts on how to implement and maintain the environment friendly through green technology and the commercial section where one can avail all the materials for the greening of the environment.

Some of the participants in the landscape design are King Louis Flowers and Plants, Jorge Mendiola, Philippine Bonsai Society, Natural Stone Society, Cactus and Succulents Society, Ma-de Rosa, Benilde Cardenas, Constancio Bautista, Lordy Alfonso with Tess Baldemoro, Rhea and Chito Lanot and the study groups on Ferns, Orchids and Chopra.

COLORFUL landscape exhibit by King Louis Flowers and Plants

Prizes include P50,000 in cash with trophy for 1st prize in the Landscape category; P30,000 in cash with trophy for the Best Plant in Show; and trophy for 1st, medal for 2nd and 3rd in each category for the individual plants.

Call Butch Duque at 4905209; Nicolo Bugtalado at 0917-4417860; Mrs. Morilla at 311-6723 or 0917-8321351.

'Manggang hilaw' with baby 'dilis' and other salads . . .

From page B1

Restaurant when Inquirer Lifestyle hosted an exhibit for Movement 8 at the Avendaño Pavilion late last year. Second host was the one from CC Cuisine. Who would have thought the lowly lata (scoured that versatile green purgee) could be used as a salad condiment, and was the perfect bed mate—with its saltiness—to counteract the vinegar dressing. The last time I heard, this very Filipino salad was taken off the menu already.

Salads are actually adapted to the Filipino constituency even if the origin of this dish could be traced to the European royal courts. Treat us Pinoys for our creativity and adaptability: imagine replacing anchovies for dressing with bagoong, and who would ever say no to the enticing smell-ading aroma of bagoong, idea at buong cda at kitlupas at kamatis na mayo or lapu-lapu for salads?

We've even dubbed our northern highlands as the "Salad Bowl of the Philippines."

Best-loved salads and their origins

Waldorf Salad—So, apple-laden salad mixed with celery, walnuts and sprinkled lemon juice, all mixed together with thin mayonnaise, probably Oscar Michel Tschirky's creation, the native d'hotel (dining room manager) of New York's Waldorf hotels found for a special supper in 1896.

Caesar Salad—Also named after Julius Caesar and did not originate from Italy but created by Caesar Cardini in 1924 in his Caesar's Palace Restaurant in Tijuana, Mexico. Made of raw or romaine lettuce and croutons, usually served with parmesan, anchovies, olive oil, lemon juice, raw egg and Worcestershire sauce. Even the late Julia Child mentioned her Tijuana trip each her parents in 1925-28 in her cookbook, and if sadan legend is to be believed, Hollywood of Wales brought the recipe to Europe after tasting Caesar Salad in Tijuana.

Salad Niçoise—Of French origin, from the Nice region. A salad that is rarely eaten before with recipes, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, hard-boiled eggs, anchovy fillets or tuna, black olives, basil, parsley and olives dressed with garlic vinaigrette.

Russian Salad/Salade Olivier—Created by Moody Russian. Cooked diced potatoes with cooked carrots, green beans and mayonnaise served on a bed of lettuce and garnished with hard-boiled eggs, gherkins and beetroot.

Cobb Salad—A 1937 creation of Bobb Cobb, owner of The Brown Derby Restaurant and a good friend of Hal Roach Studios, as it consisted of Hal Roach's own landmark Chinese Theater). Made with turkey or chicken often mixed with lettuce, watercress bacon, hard-boiled eggs, avocado, tomatoes, cheese and vinaigrette dressing.

Brunswick Salad—Originated from America, made of sliced sausage with tomatoes, grated apple, cooked French beans and pickled gherkins, dressed with parsley and vinaigrette.

Green Goddess—Created at San Francisco's Palace Hotel and named after the hot play of the 1920-21 Broadway season since it had actor George Arliss stayed in the hotel while performing the play's California staging, and loved relishing the salad. Made with lettuce with endive, spring onions, garlic clover and anchovies, with tarragon vinegar and mayonnaise—topped with chicken, crabmeat or shrimps.

Panzanella—An Italian invention probably made out of necessity since Italian cooks waste nothing and the salad was a way to utilize stale bread and vegetables from the garden. It is a bread salad with tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, onions, basil, capers, anchovies and olives.

Local personalities' favorite salads

"I love the salads of Cocina as well as Chelsea Café. Also, McCall's green salads are good."—Brandy Ortiz, fashion designer

"The chicken salad from California Pizza Kitchen is my ultimate favorite. It's great for lunch before my marathon mornings plus a protein drink before my workouts."—Bobbie Carmona, fashion director

"Best place in Manila for salads is Cibo. Old, reliable and my particular favorite is the very refreshing Insalata Nizzarda. In Singapore, I usually go to either PS Café on Dempsey (but one must try their truffle with salad—to die for!) and Hoku in the Singapore Botanic Gardens."—Monya Lim-Bonnaccorso, superhero mother and Unilever Singapore executive

"Actually, the best place to eat salads in Manila is in my house. My cuela do great things with lettuce, cashews and mangoes. It makes for a fresh and fabulous salad!"—Kristie Kenney, outgoing US ambassador

"Chicken breast salad from Chili's, and of course, Kenya's Garden salad."—Kristen Cayetano, GMA 7 reporter/108 mamalilaues

"My favorite is Sicilian Chicken salad, my staple order wherever I am in Italian. It's as well as Italian Impressionist Mario Balli in Morales Avenue. I also love Chili's salads."—JC Buenaflo, fashion designer

"For salads, Café Ysabel, at Gourmet's Café (the best) and Antonio Isod in Tagaytay, salad with a mine of Italian flavor."—Carlos Celdran, blogger/ "Walk This Way" tour organizer

"I just had the chicken breast salad in Chili's last Monday, ang sarap! I used to crave for the Romano-dressed Caesar salad from Italianni's while my husband Miss here their Sicilian Chicken Salad."—Tweetie De Leon-Soriquez, supermodel and accessories designer/owner of SCE.

"Green salads, and my favorite one is definitely Salad, no pork or meat in it. It's the thick or thin—not sure which—Salad of Cyma and I take it with a lot of smelly blue cheese crumbled on top."—Ariel Ramano, lawyer

"In the early '90s when Gourmet's Café still had their salad bar in Tagaytay... that will be hotted by the salad that was worth the trip."—Mona Tesoro Poblador, owner of Bonina Salad

"I forgot the exact name of the salad with candied walnuts at Cyma, but that's my hands down choice. Another favorite would be radish salad with green mangoes in any Thai resto like People's Palace."—Bernice Salvacion, fashion jobs-ingrapher

Salad recipes

Truffle and Arugula Salad

Serves four persons

Ingredients

4 slices of sourdough bread
1 garlic clove
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Salad
4 cups arugula
1 tbsp lemon juice
3-4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for dressing
1 small truffle
Parmesan cheese

For the bruschetta, toast the bread in the oven until it is crisp. Slice the garlic clove in half and rub the edge over both sides of the bread, then drizzle a little olive oil over each slice.

Place the arugula in a bowl and dressy with lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper. Gently mix together. Thinly slice the truffle using a truffle slicer or mandoline and toss half over the salad to thin as possible and will crank easily if touched by hand. Divide the salad among four plates. Shave slivers of Parmesan off the block with a peeler, mandoline or sharp knife. Arrange the Parmesan around the truffle and try not to put too much; you don't want to overpower the truffle. Drizzle with a little olive oil. Serve with pieces of bruschetta.

Italianni's Sicilian Chicken Salad

Serves four persons

200 g Romaine lettuce
200 g Roma tomatoes
120 g cooked chicken, diced and shredded
90 ml Sicilian chicken dressing
2 sprigs of ripe mango, diced
100 g seedless grapes, cut into halves
40 g tomatoes, diced
5 g pecans, lightly toasted

Place Romaine lettuce and croutons in mixing bowl with Sicilian dressing. Using tongs, toss salad until all leaves are thoroughly coated with dressing. Place the cooked chicken in the middle of the tossed salad; garnish with ripe mangoes, tomatoes, diced grapes and diced ripe mangoes around and over. Serve slightly chilled.

Gourmet's Café Mandarin Salad

Serves four persons

6 oz mixed greens (Romaine, Green Ice, Red Bulb, Lolla Rosa, Arugula)
One whole orange, skinned and peeled
10 pieces of squid balls, deep fried and cut into halves
120 g cooked crab sticks
1 whole cucumber, remove seeds and sliced
1 c Gourmet's Cafe herb chevre dressing

In a bowl, place the chopped greens and cucumber with herb chevre dressing. Toss slowly until all leaves are coated with dressing. Place the cooked squid balls around and over the salad, together with crab sticks and peeled oranges. Serve with extra herb chevre dressing on the side, just in case.

Chef Pol Pobladur's Emulsifying Mangga at Baby Dilis

Serves four persons

1 c green mango, julienned
1 tablespoon sliced tomato, seeded
½ onion
1 tbsp bagong alamang
1 tsp honey
1 tbsp toasted peanuts
1/2 c quick fried baby dilis
1 cup of sliced spring onions
1 calamansi

Place the green mango, tomato, onion, bagong and honey in a mixing bowl, squeeze the calamansi and mix well. Place salad in a plate, garnish with baby dilis, toasted peanuts and spring onions.

GOURMET'S Mustard Salad

MIXED greens from Gourmet's

LIFESTYLE Food

REINVENT STAPLE FOOD—SAVE BUT INNOVATE

Corned beef croquettes and corned beef flamenco maki

It's comfort food that should test the Pinoy's zest for innovation

By Amelia S. Yapo

WITH "UNDOY" AND "Pepeng" still fresh on people's minds—and bank accounts—this year is looking to be cheap and practical, but innovative.

Corned beef is comfort food that should really test the Pinoy's zest for innovation.

Frisc Argentina Corned Beef comes two new recipes that are the result of thinking out of the box—Corned Beef Croquettes and Corned Beef Flamenco Maki.

"Corned beef has always been the staple breakfast food," says Melissa Lim-Lim, senior product manager of Argentina. "Now we've introducing ways for people to enjoy their Argentina corned beef."

The two recipes are part of Argentina's campaign to extend the use of corned beef.

Lim-Lim also stresses Argentina Corned Beef's added health benefits—protein, iron and other. "It's not really just about the taste; we're giving customers premium and no-phosphate corned beef."

Budgeter Boy Alcantara's unique take on the household staple: Corned beef with onion and pepper burger. He takes it for breakfast when he's in the mood for variety.

On special occasions, Alcantara raises corned beef with pasta.

"It's my comfort food," he says. "I can roast and eat my day with corned beef."

Corned Beef Croquettes

1 tbsp cooking oil
2 tbsp chopped onion
2 tbsp chopped celery
2 tbsp chopped carrots
1 tsp minced garlic
200 g Argentina Corned Beef
¼ tsp salt
1/8 tsp ground black pepper
¼ c mashed potatoes
½ c all-purpose flour
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 c Japanese breadcrumbs
Cooking oil for deep-frying
Ingredients for onion-garlic dip:
2 tbsp milk powder
½c water
¼c mayonnaise
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
½ tsp salt
1 tbsp chopped spring onion

How: cooking oil in sauté pan. Add

CORNED BEEF 01

GO JAPANESE with corned beef flamenco maki.

Herbal teas help strengthen mind and body

(Part 2)

ALCOHOL, SODAS, CAFFEINE drinks are taxing on one's liver and kidneys and depress the immune system, according to Christine Gonzales NMD, PhD, co-founder of Wellness Institute and director of Natural Medicine.

Clean, purified water is an essential part of a healthy diet. It facilitates our body's metabolic process, nutrient transport, hormone factor transport and waste removal.

Learn to love the joy of drinking herbal teas. It is great for mine and mild intestinal cleansing plus the added benefit of not just burning fats but also lowering one's weight slowly.

Vegetable juicing can provide all the basics of human nutrition, including carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals and enzymes.

Enzymes spark the hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions that occur throughout the body. They are essential for the digestion and absorption of food, the conversions of food into body tissues and the production of energy at the cellular level. In fact, enzymes are essential for most of the building and rebuilding that occurs in the body every day. When foods are cooked, enzymes can be destroyed. This is why raw juices are so important. They provide an excellent source of all important enzymes.

■ Carrot's beta-carotene and the ellagic acid found in fresh apple juice are clinically proven anticancer agents.

■ Limonene from lemon's edible pith is recognized as a potent anticancer nutrient, and is also effective in dissolving gallstones.

■ Apple's soluble fiber, ellagic acid and Vitamin C, combined with celery's healthy dose of minerals and electrolytes, can cleanse and rebalance the system.

■ Digestive enzymes found in honeydew, papaya and pineapple reduce inflammation and energize the body.

Immune Builder Juice

1 pound fresh pineapple fruit
2-3 stalks of celery
1-2 Moringa stalks
3-5 carrots, scrubbed well, green tops removed

Cut pineapple and carrots into sections that fit the juicer's feed tube. Stack celery and Moringa stalks through the feed tube. Stir the juice and pour into a glass. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Herbal teas are considered pure water with a plus (vitamins, minerals). Herbal teas have been utilized for thousands of years. The seemingly mystical healing properties of various herbs have supposedly helped cure afflictions, as well as strengthen the body and mind. There is mounting evidence that herbal teas have cancer-fighting properties. In particular, rosmarinic acid is rich in flavonoids, powerful antioxidants, and is an excellent source of phytochemicals.

Antioxidants help protect the body against disease by counteracting the harmful effects of free radicals—strong, highly reactive particles that accumulate in the body as by-products of metabolism. Free radicals injure surrounding cells through oxidation. Left unchecked, they can damage cellular DNA and potentially cause cancer.

Antioxidants, such as Vitamins C, E and beta-carotene, are free radical scavengers. Research from both the National Foundation for Cancer Research and University of Kansas reports that green tea is 100 times more potent than Vitamin C and 25 times more potent than Vitamin E at protecting cells from damage linked to cancer, heart disease and other diseases.

Tea are convenient, pleasant, a tasty way to utilize various herbal remedies. The delightful scent of "nature's gift" is that it can be part of us; that is, there is so much we can do to make our tea choices flavorful and delicious.

Herbal teas can be prepared hot and steamy or chilled, with little honey, a slice of lemon, coconut sugar or molasses. If cared or heal causes, it is best to use stevia or molasses only.

Grapey pettagon and lemongrass teas are popular flavors. Not only are they delightful to drink, these also fill your home with lasting and natural aroma. Their herbal properties can overcome motion sickness, relieve cold-related stress and soothe the stomach. It is amazing how such herbal tea comes with a list of medicinal benefits that keep us healthy and strong.

Other flavor-preservation and cool-cut teas: malunggay (Moringa oleifera), lemon melissa (Melissa officinalis), hierba buena (Lagerstroemia speciosa) jagonoli (Mitra Nagonoli), comfrey (Symphytum officinale), balsamiflora) and turmeric

HERBAL 01

KITCHEN RESCUE

Maggie Aquitan

Foie gras served cold, pan-fried and as crème brûlée

By Marissa O. Chikiamco
Contributor

IT MUST BE THE FOIE gras calling. Usually, after the initial surge of the crowd during peak hours, there would be less diners and diners can eat a somewhat less buffet.

Not so at Paseo Uno the other Friday. It was as if everyone in town had heard that Duck Inn would be available at Manhattan Oriental's all-day restaurant, at around 10 p.m., just when things should be winding down, a whole new crowd crossed up, whereupon lines four-persons deep started forming all over again.

"Sino ba think we haven't eaten formally announced this yet," said the hotel's director of communications, Charisse Chiokiao.

Perhaps word had gotten around among foie gras lovers. Mention foie gras and at once they're there, where this fatty monstrous delicacy can drive them to right of delight. What probably made it more compelling was that the foie gras was being served in a buffet, which means they could have their fill of it for one fixed price.

That evening, there were three different ways in which to indulge in foie gras. In the cold appetizer section, there were blocks of cold foie gras, which one could spread on thin crackers or on any of the bread varieties from the hotel bakeshop.

There was also foie gras **crème brûlée**, whipped so a light and airy texture, served in shot glasses. The most intense experience, however, was at the cooking station, where a chef would pan-fry foie gras per customer's order. With it came an array of accompaniments such as mango salsa, cherry-mustard, onion marmalade and balsamic vinegar, their fruity acidity perfectly complementing the rich, buttery taste of foie gras.

Naturally everyone seemed to be having a serving of all three, but from the looks of it, the pan-fried foie gras won the hands-down favorite.

Expensive delicacy

Which was understandable. Foie gras as right up there in the pantheon of gourmet food. Tender, satiny and decadently rich, foie gras is the liver of goose or duck that had been fattened for four to five months. A specialty of France's Alsace and Perigord regions, foie gras is an expensive delicacy, which is why it's rarely offered in a buffet.

While it's great served cold, pan-frying it intensifies the flavor, making it more sensuous and decadent than it already is. That Manhattan Oriental would offer foie gras in Paseo Uno's buffet is a dining treat—and an apparently shrewd and successful one.

For a while, dinner downstairs have been taking Paseo Uno, which has been serving a grand buffet for years, for granted. Now, with foie gras on its menu every Friday and Saturday evening, its buffet has been elevated to a dinner level, and many are once again taking to it.

The luxury buffet, as the hotel calls it, included other un-customary treats as well: live sweating Lobsters, for one, its aromatic smell while being grilled over an open flame gave one the feel of being at a seaside barbecue. Drizzled with lemon butter sauce or vinaigrette, it was just as alluring as the foie gras, more so because being less fatty, it made one feel less guilty.

The roast beef (US rib eye, on loan) looked very juicy and tender, and could be a complete meal in itself with all the trimmings of Yorkshire pudding (great when drizzled with the red wine sauce) and baked potatoes (topped with sour cream, chives and bacon bits).

A gargantuan whole fresh tuna, unsurprisingly, looked it over the cold station, which included fat oysters on the half shell, an assortment of sushi and salmon sashimi. On other days, the selection of dishes prepared by executive chef Jordi Ortiz would include char-grilled sea bass, which seemed grouper, Singapore black pepper crab and soft shell tempura.

With all that, dessert would seem superfluous. Or so my companion and I thought... until we saw that the dessert spread included a chocolate fountain, make-it-yourself buffet, chocolate mousse, bread pudding and a variety of ice cream flavors.

Having already indulged in everything else, we all decided to go for broke and picked our own favorites. Mine was Milo-lava flan (telling myself that it'll didn't include the rest of the Milo-bati with it, it would be less alcohol).

Meanwhile the new arrivals were still plastering around the foie gras station, ordering more beef and mingling expectantly as their lobsters were being grilled.

Paseo Uno's Luxury Buffet, P1,627+, served every Friday and Saturday evening. Manhattan Oriental Manila, Makati Avenue, Makati City. For reservations, call 752-8888.

PAN-FRIED foie gras

FOIE gras served two ways: in thick, spreadable slabs, and as crème brûlée, accompanied by dried fruits

CHAMS (along with lobsters) are part of the luxury buffet served at Paseo Uno on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Corned beef croquettes . . .

From page D1

onion, celery, carrots and garlic. Allow to sweat over low to medium heat for 1-2 minutes or until aromatic. Brown corned beef. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside to cool.

Place about ½ heaping tbsp of mashed potatoes in your hand. Add ½ tsp of corned beef filling in the middle. Add another tablespoon of mashed potatoes on top. Shaping, gently form into a croquette.

Dredge croquette in flour, dip in egg then roll in breadcrumbs. Deep-fry in hot oil until golden brown but with onion garlic chip.

To make onion garlic dip: Mix all ingredients together. Cover and chill for at least an hour before serving to let flavors blend.

Corned Beef Fiamenco Maki

1 recipe sushi rice
1 recipe maki filling
¼ c shoestring potato chips (Pilipch original flavor)
2 medium ripe nalas, cut into 8 strips each and fried
6 large eggs, beaten and cooked in a pan to make 4 thin sheets
4 sheets nori, cut into halves
1 recipe chimichuri

Place half nori on a bamboo mat and flatten about ½ cup of sushi rice. Place a sheet of egg over rice and place about 3 tbsp corned beef, potato sticks and 2 sticks of banana. Roll and tighten to hold shape. Repeat procedure and slice each roll into 8 pieces. Serve with chimichuri on the side or top each slice with ½ teaspoon of the sauce.

Makes 8 servings.

Sushi rice

3 c Japanese (sushi) rice, washed twice and drained
3 ½ c water
7 tbsp rice vinegar
3 tbsp mirin
2 tbsp sugar

Place washed rice in a rice cooker and pour in water. Soak rice for 30 minutes before cooking. Cook rice until done.

In a bowl, blend vinegar, mirin and sugar and set aside until ready for use.

Spread the hot steamed rice on a large plate or a large bowl. Please use a commercial bowl to prevent any rice from getting too wet. It's best to use a wooden bowl called *sushi oke*. Sprinkle the vinegar mixture over the rice and fold the rice by *shamoji* (rice spatula) quickly. Be careful not to smash the rice.

To cool and remove the moisture of the rice well, use a fan as you mix sushi rice. This will give sushi rice a shiny look. It's best to use sushi rice right away.

MELISSA Lim-Lara, senior product manager of Argentina Corned Beef

Maki filling

1 tbsp sesame oil
½ tsp paprika
1/3 c minced onions
2 tbsp minced garlic
½ tsp chili flakes
2 tbsp minced parsley
1 c 175 g Argentina Corned Beef
1 tbsp red wine
pinch pepper

Heat oil in a pan. Sauté garlic, onions, chili flakes, paprika and parsley. Add in corned beef, wine and pepper and cook for a few minutes until almost dry. Set aside.

Chimichuri

½ c chopped parsley
2 tsp minced garlic
½ c extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp wine vinegar
zest of 1 lemon
juice of 1 lemon
½ tsp salt
pinch cayenne pepper
pinch pepper

Mix all ingredients well and season to taste.

MALUNGGAY can help prevent certain diseases.

Herbal teas help strengthen mind and body

From page D1

(Camellia fungo).

Research and studies show these are herbal teas for prevention of cancers of the oral cavity, stomach and colon. Some studies link tea with decreased risk of lung and skin cancers.

Cheers! A cup of herbal tea for your health.

(To be continued)

The tutu on last week's column were my accommodation. "To be continued" was supposed to have been directly under the paragraph "Indulge in Food Pals."

In February, I will be in Davao to teach and conduct my Mindanao Culinary Heritage Tour. Reservations are ongoing. To reserve and for a copy of my 2010 Cooking Class Schedules, call 8280398, 09178744, 09083723396.

E-mail the author at rsquezo@inquirer.com.ph

Easy-to-prepare, nutrient-rich pastries

CHEF JAMES ANTOLIN, VICE president of the Pastry Alliance of the Philippines and pastries manager of the Institute of Culinary Arts Food Services, shares two yummy, nutrient-rich pastries one can prepare in a jiffy with the help of Glad Cook 'n' Bake—a versatile cooking partner not just for baking, but also for other cooking methods like frying, steaming and grilling. An indispensable kitchen aid, its specially designed nonstick coating makes it a better and finer way to prepare it doesn't leave a "taste" aftertaste on baked goodies.

Chef Antolin, in fact, at more than Glad Cook 'n' Bake is so easy to use, "I never had to spend time greasing them. I also never had problems with my products sticking," He shares the following easy to-prepare pastry recipes with the aid of Glad Cook 'n' Bake.

Praline Truffles

2 c Milk Couverture
¾ c cream
3/8 c butter
3/8 c cocoa butter, finely chopped
3/8 c praline paste
½ c chicharon hamulmi, toasted and chopped

Bring cream to a boil.

Remove the cream from heat. Stir in chocolate and cocoa butter.

When the mixture is cooled to 90 degrees, stir in praline paste and butter.

Using Glad Cook 'n' Bake paper, scoop the mixture at 18 g each.

Refrigerate before rolling in the chopped toasted hazelnuts.

White Chocolate & Cranberry Scones with Lemon Curd

Yield: 12 pcs
1 c bread flour
1 tbsp baking powder
¼ cup salt
1/8 c white chocolate
¼ c dried cranberries
½ c unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
1 pc egg
2/3 c milk
1/8 c white sugar
2 pcs egg
1 tbsp cream

Lemon Curd

2 c lemon juice
1 ½ c sugar
6 yolks
8 whole eggs
2 ½ c butter
3 each lemon zest

Sift together flour, baking powder and salt using fine sifter and Glad Cook 'n' Bake paper.

Transfer the sifted ingredients in a mixing bowl. Cut in butter until pea-size. Add in the white chocolate and cranberries. Make a well at the center.

Dissolve the sugar in milk and egg. Pour over dry ingredients. Mix until fully hydrated. Gather into a ball then wrap with Glad Cling Wrap. Allow to rest in the chiller for 15 minutes.

Roll out the dough into ½-inch thickness and apply 3 batch folds. Allow to rest in the chiller for 15 minutes.

Roll out the dough into 1/2 inch and cut using cookie cutters. Transfer to a sheet tray lined with Glad Cook 'n' Bake paper. Chill for 5 minutes.

Beat egg and cream mixture together.

Line cookies apart using Glad Cook 'n' Bake paper to prevent burning. Brush with egg wash.

Bake at 375°F for 15-20 minutes.

For Lemon Curd:

Boil juice, zest and sugar.

Blend whole eggs and yolks together.

Temper in eggs to the boiling juice and chicken. Place on a mixer to cool.

Whisk in butter and strain using a fine strainer.

Store in a Glad-wear container and refrigerate.

PRALINE Truffles

WHITE Chocolate and Cranberry Scones with Lemon Curd

DINING OUT

Choco cake with whipped cream, caramel

UCC PARK CAFÉ (a result of it's also known as Better Than Sex cake. It's a topped with caramel, whipped cream, chocolate syrup and chocolate flakes with UCC Park Café's blended coffee. This new UCC Park Café branches at Spm Park, Fairmont Mall in Ilimi, Bonifacio City (tel. 4101283). Other UCC Coffee branches are at Power Center, Makati City (8104588); Commonwealth Ave. (9286846); Forbes Town Center (840-1885) and Burgos Circle, The Fort (8561447).

UCC's Butter Toast Sea cake

Satays and barbecues

InterContinental Manila's Satay Gardens poolside restaurant (tel. 7903888) offers eat-all-you-can delicacies like sinuglog from the wok squad and prawn satay, Chinese dim sums, barbecued satays and barbecues for P888 net per person. Reservations are recommended. Get exclusive insider trips to exciting destinations abroad courtesy of Princess Cruises and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. A coupon is also for two Ruby Anniversary Island Suites will be issued for every P4,888 in a single receipt purchase at any restaurant outlet. For every one-night stay at a qualifying rate of P4,000++ or for every P40,000 spent in a single banquet meeting or event. All dates are cruise trip for two to Alaska, the Caribbean or the Mexican Riviera, and two round-trip plane tickets from Manila to any 60 European destinations.

Coffee and pastries

La Bistro serves coffee and pastries at the arrival area of Terminals 1 and 2 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The local company serves Kape Isla Philippine coffees.

"BAGNET IN PINAKBET"

Buccaneer Republik, a new Boccaneer-inspired grill along Tomas Morato, QC, serves Bagnet in Binagoongan, Bagnet in Pinakbet and Adobo, Igado and Inihaliliwak Jambangan cooked in a Bistek, pambangan Tortocki, Chicharon Fried Rice, Longganisa Fried Rice and Clay Pot Rice. Call 3749491 or 3743674.

seasoned bean sprouts in rice as it used the country. Besides Bandar, La Bistro has local blended drinks and iced teas.

Japonica rice

All rice meals in Tokyo Tokyo are now served with Japonica rice. It combines the features of long grained, naturally fragrant Jasmine rice with the delicious chewy, sticky texture of Japanese rice. Tokyo Tokyo has more than 60 outlets nationwide.

SEAFOOD BUFFET

Cinderella Alabang Town Center (tel. 7712768) offers lunch and dinner buffet. The buffet is also available at Crocodile Thai Dining House, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, EL, The Ledge (7108765) and Crocodile Trocona Mall, QC (981 3667). Redwood Power Plant Mall offers a la carte dishes (7289765).

'Rise to Fame' features John Robert Powers students

JOHN ROBERT POWERS International mall fashion exclusive institutional activity entitled "Rise to Fame" to showcase the talents of students in acting, modeling, TV commercial, fashion print and shows, wedding, choral recitation, singing and dancing. The event will happen on Jan. 28, 6-8 p.m., at Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, Podium 4, Philippine Trade Training Center, NBBC Plaza, Ayala Ave. cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati. At least 80 students will participate in this event. Special guests are international model Chelsea Bilson and model and TV personality Bimbo Gustavo. Overall director and creative choreographer is Ding Cuchuta. Technical director is Raymond Bentir; Ian Dass is stage director; TV and film direction is Dean Lee. Directors for talent categories are Gabby Restauro for singing; Christian Bautista for dancing; Ramon Agrupis Dalena for modeling; and Brenda Arcadio for fashion print; Japanese actor Ory Dollvery; Josiah Catering; Dermatologist Amelia Aglaoog; Sari Miguel Corp.; Profmouth Coffee; Home Sari Dressmaking; Dentista Toothpaste; Actech shoes and Professional Insights. Call 8920611.

CHELSEA Bilson and Bimbo Gustavo

Lecture at Instituto

Cuban poet, scriptwriter, editor and journalist Alex Fleites will give a lecture on the personalities of literary Sunday from Cuba on Jan. 15, 7 p.m. at Instituto Cervantes de Manila, 826 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 5261480; fax 5261446; visit http://manila.cervantes.es.

Workshop on communication

A workshop on how to improve one's skills in communicating ideas, products and services is being offered by Tower Book Shop starting this January. Conducted by book author Visitacion "Chit" R. de la Torre, the workshop shall be on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 6-8 p.m., at Window Tower, 163 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati. The scope of the workshop covers the four basic skills essential in communication, whether in one's business, in one's office work or in everyday transactions. From theory to practice, the participant shall also be exposed to and use the rapid learning. Limited slots only. Call 8154838 or 8190003, or e-mail chitdelatorre@yahoo.com.

Book on Pinoy achievers

"Outstanding Filipino Achievers," another bible book by Rhoda Trinidad, "Chit" R. de la Torre, and published by academician, Dr. Genevieve V. Ledesma, is one of the prizes. Call 8154838 or 8190003, e-mail chitdelatorre@yahoo.com.

Tribute to Conchita Sunico

To honor the memory of Kartilagan International founder and executive director Conchita Sunico, a grand reunion of former Kartilagan International models, fashion designers, artists, production and office staff, sponsors and friends will take place on Jan. 28. Among the highlights of the cocktail-dinner affair is a fashion parade to be spearheaded by the former Kartilagan top mannequins and beauty queens. Flying in to Manila to take part in the reunion are former beauty queens Eva Reyes and Virgi Dominguez and top models Nadine Fornasi, Cecilia Reyes, Baby Santiago, Anita Contreras, Cynthia Cruz, Marilyn Villegas, Tita Marquez, Nikki Fontanilla, Ana Tuason, Lissette Delfino, Nina Rosa and Tess Galang. Other Kartilagan models who have confirmed their attendance are Ping Valencia, Corazon Cevilla, Trina Yuchengco, Margie Moran, Frannie Aguinaldo, Jennifer Pefto, Marilena Kuizon, Bernice Mendiola, Erlyne Bernardez, Emily Nachio, Monita Antonio, Betchay Garcia, Melanie Marquez, Carmina Gutierrez, Suzie Weiss, Tisha Dominguez, Carol Caballero and Marian Dominguez. Aileen Alonzo, Ben Fernandez, Pilay Mendoza and Christian Espinosa are among the Kartilagan fashion designers attending the affair. Theater luminaries and former Kartilagan artists Dimples Romana, Lee Salvan and Cocoy Laudimer have confirmed their attendance. Former Kartilagan international models, designers, artists and sponsors who would like to attend may contact Angie delos Reyes at tel. 8982999 or 09189387021.

BodyTalk demo

Canadian BodyTalk Access trainer Dorothy Krause returns to the Philippines for a free public demonstration of BodyTalk Access on Jan. 19, 3-6 p.m., at Bonifacio Highstreet Library cor. 32nd and Bonifacio Aves. The Jan. 19 event kicks off a month-long series of BodyTalk activities, featuring a two-weekend seminar, workshops and appreciation of the larger BodyTalk System. On Jan. 21, Krause will be joined by Filipino-American Godelaine Hernandez Gee-Mendoza in free public demonstration of BodyTalk Access and the BodyTalk System. Mendoza will be teaching Basic Biomechanical Modules 1 and 2 of the BodyTalk System. Call 894 6969 or 09189252200; e-mail myla.baldonado@yahoo.com.

Clearance sale

Sta. Lucia Mall offers Clearance sale of up to 70 percent on Jan. 15-17 at its Department Store, Supermarket, Hypermarket Galleria, Toys and over 300 specialty stores and boutiques. Exchange P300 single or accumulated purchase receipt during the sale for a raffle coupon for a chance to bring home instrument. Meanwhile, in the Great Toys, Great Store Raffle Promo, every P500 single purchase receipt from now until March 14 gives a chance to win the Nissan Sentra. Other prizes are at stake in the second grand draw on March 20. Sta. Lucia Mall is at Marcos Highway cor. Felix Avenue, Cainta. Call 6915481 loc. 113 or visit www.stalucia.com.ph.

Feng shui convention

The 9th Philippine Feng Shui Convention will be held Jan. 23 at the Center Stage of SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City and on Feb. 5 in Cebu City. The convention will reveal both the positive and negative outlook for everyone in 2010 and specific forecast for each zodiac sign in the areas of wealth, career, romance, health. Call (c) 0908, 8000 0000, 0 0000, 0000 0, 4136888 or 4012136.

Knife skills. Life skills.

8 Months Diploma in Culinary Arts

Classes start on January 18, 2010.
Enrollment on-going.

GCA CULINARY

INQUIRER mobile news

INQUIRER LIFESTYLE: In tomorrow's Lifestyle, read about how a go-with-the-flow couple raises their children; how to pack Christmas lights and decor for storage; and where to find the "batingting."

STAY AHEAD.

READ TOMORROW'S HEADLINES ON YOUR MOBILE PHONE.

text INQ <space> ON <space> STYLE to 4467 for SMS alerts

Call 896-6000 for more details.

Easy-to-drink, affordable wine pays homage to its founder

DURING THE END OF THE lunch that we found ourselves in the company of, interior, Jean Michel Cazes, proprietor of Château Lynch-Bages in Pauillac in the Bordeaux region, until he wrestled with DIM, the American corporate economy.

My short life as a computer programmer and insurance guru is a common part. You'd have to have worked in the early days of computerization, when the business as we know it today wasn't even there, to understand that feeling of belonging.

But that discovery was just one of the things we learned at that lunch to introduce Jean Michel and his wines at the Old Manila of The Peninsula Manila. In, We had three courses—pan-seared scallops, pepper roasted rack of lamb and chocolate truffle cake—hosted by distributors Bacchus and Bacchus Epicure Ltd. (tel. 813-3022).

Wine families always have a history.

It was a puzzle at first that the Château didn't carry the Cazes name. The literature we were given revealed that the founder of the winery was Michel Lynch, the 18th-century wine grower in the Bages estate. He is said to have introduced shoemaking to the wine process, separating grape stalk and berries before fermentation.

The Michel Lynch winery went through several owners until the Cazes family took over in the 1930s when Jean Michel's grandfather acquired the property from the client of a bank he was working for. There was an economic crisis and the amount he paid was only for the house because the vines were worthless.

The wines that lunch were part of the Michel Lynch line, a new range that pays homage to the founder. It is also Jean Michel's move to make a medium kind of wine, easy to drink and affordable, a line of wines for those who don't want to wait to drink good wine.

Job competence

Jean Michel was asked if he took up oenology or winemaking. He reminded us of the wordless reaction of the vines at the time when he went to college. Instead, he studied engineering and geology. Geology brought him to study in Russia. Time because of the oil bans were there.

But he did return to France with a good command of English and the confidence to talk to people. These added to his competence in his job with BIM. He believes that his studies and work experience were enough to enable him to run the company for 20 years.

Jean Michel took over the winery when his father, André, sold him (but the property would be sold). A successful management career was abandoned to go back to Bordeaux and it took him some time to improve the vines and wines with some financial help from his father's successful insurance business. (and which he later bonded).

Jean Michel's engineering knowledge let him modernize by designing in stainless steel vats.

His mastery of English helped to promote his wines around the world and then he helped other Bordeaux wineries to do the same. For him, the presence of his son has helped him create friends as well, a network, big plus.

He had this story about one friend as we passed her a photograph that hands. Paul Sherier, the great French chef, sold him a property near his place. The line-up is on the right-most because in the caption, the names always start with the person on the left.

Everyone, because said, will read the last name and many will not read the first.

The complete Jean Michel line-up of wines is available at Bacchus Epicure Ltd. in Makati.

JEAN MICHEL Cazes, proprietor of Château Lynch-Bages in Pauillac in the Bordeaux region

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

ENROLLMENT IS NOW GOING ON

Diploma Courses (Classes begin on January 20, 2010)

- Diploma in Commercial Cooking and Culinary Arts (9 months)
- Diploma in Commercial Cooking, Culinary Arts and Entrepreneurship (11 months)

Concessionaire 101: Short Courses

- Fundamentals of Culinary Arts
- Fundamentals of Asian Cuisine
- Fundamentals of European Cuisine (February 1 to February 28)

First Gourmet Academy

Capitol Greenstreet, Capitol Hills Drive, Old Balara, QC
Tel. Nos.: 981-6465 • 981-1467
info@firstgourmetcookacademy.com • www.firstgourmetcookacademy.com

New take on old favorites

SURPRISE YOUR FAMILY AND friends with a new take on their old favorites as The Maya Kitchen presents shank-loved dishes with a twist. Light chardonnay is served with dishlings of cassata and topped with fresh fruits. The tasted loaf cake is made with layers of cinnamon and walnut encased for fragrance and crunch while plain dumplings come alive with shades of pastel colors.

Visit www.themayakitchen.com or e-mail restaurant@themayakitchen.com.

Shortbread

3 ½ c Maya Cornstarch
½ c confectioners' sugar
½ c all-purpose flour
½ cup butter
1 whole egg
½ tsp vanilla
Topping:
Chilled whipped cream
Prepared fresh strawberries

In a bowl, mix well all ingredients until smooth. Roll out cookie dough into ½-inch-in thickness. Using a cookie cutter, cut into flower-like designs. Arrange 1-inch apart on slightly greased cookie sheet. Bake in a preheated 275° F oven until done, but not browned, about 30-35 minutes, adjust baking time if needed.

To assemble:
Layer cookies and whipped cream on a serving plate, garnish top with fresh strawberries.

Makes 8 pieces.

Streusel Cinnamon Cake

Streusel mixture:
½ c pecan or walnuts, coarsely chopped
1/3 cup brown sugar
2 tbsp all-purpose flour
1 tsp cinnamon powder
2 tbsp butter
Cake base:
½ c butter
1 1/3 cups sugar
5 pieces egg yolks
2 c all-purpose flour
2 ½ tsp baking powder
2 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla
½ c milk
Prepare streusel:
In a bowl combine the nuts, brown sugar, flour and cinnamon powder; mix until well blended. Cut in the butter with pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Set aside.

Prepare cake:
Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and line two 8 x 3 x 3-inch loaf pans. Set aside.

Cream butter until soft. Add in sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Add yolks one at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift flour, baking powder and salt together. Add to the creamed mixture alternately the vanilla and milk. Blend well.

Pour half portion of cake mixture into prepared pans then sprinkle some streusel; pour the remaining cake mixture and topped with the remaining streusel. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until done. Cool and slice.

Makes two 8X3X3-inch loaf cake

LIGHT chardonnay served with dishlings of cassata and topped with fresh fruits

COLORED dumplings for New Year

STREUSEL Cinnamon Cake

Colored dumplings for New Year

Wrappers:
1 c Maya Cake Flour
½ cup salt
4 tbsp boiling water
Choice of food color (pink, yellow, green)
Filling:
½ kilogram pechay, blanched and chopped
150 g ground pork
2 pc dried shiitake mushroom, soaked then chopped
2 tbsp chopped leeks
2 tsp chopped ginger
1 tsp sesame oil
2 tsp Maya oyster sauce
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp salt
black pepper
Soy sesame sauce:
¼ c Japanese soy sauce
¼ c water
½ cup toasted nuts
1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
2 tbsp chopped garlic
Enough water for steaming
Prepare dough:
Place the flour in a bowl. Dissolve salt in water, add desired food color then add flour. Mix well. Cover the dough and let rest until it is ready.

Squeeze out the water from the chopped Baguio pechay. Set aside. In another bowl, combine all ingredients for the filling, add squeezed out Baguio pechay. Mix well.

Transfer the dough to a floured surface. Knead lightly then form in to cylinder. Cut into 24 pieces. Roll out each dough to 3 inches in diameter. Fill each dough with ground pork mixture. Fold into half moon shape. Press edges to seal.

In a steamer, boil enough water. Arrange dumplings in the steamer and steam for 20-25 minutes or until pork is cooked. Serve with sauce prepared by simply combining all the ingredients in a bowl.

Makes 24 - 3 inch rounds

Jollibee Chicken Barbecue

What Pinoys love best about the Jollibee Chicken Barbecue

Ask Pinoys to describe a sumptuous chicken barbecue meal and among the first things that come to mind are the juicy meat and the delicious barbecue flavor.

And these exact qualities are what Pinoys love most about Jollibee's latest creation - the Jollibee Chicken Barbecue. Indeed, Jollibee has mastered the craft of coming up with new and great-tasting products that are sure to satisfy the discerning Filipino palate.

"The Jollibee Chicken Barbecue tastes like my mom's homemade chicken barbecue. It has the right amount of seasonings, making it mouth-watering and simply sumptuous," explains Paru Nobis, a 22-year-old software development analyst.

"The chicken meat is soft and the barbecue flavor seeped right through the chicken. The best part? The premium chicken's generous serving along with its reasonable price," says Bobby Torres, 24, an online editor.

With the Jollibee Chicken Barbecue, Jollibee takes a Filipino gastronomic classic and improves upon it for the enjoyment of its customers. Made only from generous premium chicken cuts, the Jollibee Chicken Barbecue uses a special marinade made from top secret ingredients which endows it with that mouth-watering barbecue taste. Soaked long enough for the flavor to thoroughly seep in, it also utilizes a special culinary technique that slowly cooks the chicken to perfection. The result is no less thoroughly cooked while still remaining juicy and tender. Furthermore, the Jollibee Chicken Barbecue is served with its perfect accompaniments-a delicious barbecue dipping sauce and steaming java rice-for a hearty, unforgettable dining experience.

And because it's from Jollibee, it's friendly on the pocket. The Jollibee Chicken Barbecue is available as a 1-pc. solo meal for P68 and as a 2-pc. solo meal for P116. Has as meals, which come with a regular drink, on the other hand, are priced at P99 and P139 for the 1-pc. and 2-pc. sets, respectively. Don't get left behind and find out why a growing number of people love and keep coming back for more of this hubbed and delicious new creation only from Jollibee!

ENTERTAINMENT

Lira Enerio-S. Velarde

Bubble Alert: Text BIZ INFORMER to 4427 | Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment | E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.net.ph

Bublé engaged to Argentinian actress

NEW YORK—MICHAEL BUBLÉ'S LATEST SONG MAY BE TITLED "Haven't Met You Yet," but he apparently has found the one. The singer's publicist, Liz Rosenberg, confirmed that the 34-year-old Canadian crooner proposed to girlfriend-actress Luisana Lopilato in November. The 22-year-old Argentinian plays Bublé's love interest in the music video for "Haven't Met You Yet." Bublé was previously engaged to Academy Award-nominated actress Emily Blunt. AP

Talent show faces censors' sanction

By Marinel R. Cruz

ARE CBN HAS QUESTIONED THE decision of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) to suspend the airing of the talent program "Showtime" for 283 days because of the "vulgar" words uttered by its cast host Jenny Boomina Boom on two episodes last week.

In a statement sent to Inquirer on Tuesday, ABS-CBN said it has decided to "remove" Vhong as the show's host "in the spirit of self-regulation."

"Despite this, MTRCB still imposed a 20-day preventive suspension [on] the program," the statement said. "Thus, the network questions the need for [this] when Boom has already been removed from the program."

The order signed on Monday by MTRCB chair Maritess Laguardia said the 20-day suspension was given to "liberalize" to prevent "further probable violation" of pertinent provisions of Section 3c of Presidential Decree No. 1986, which gives the MTRCB the authority to keep sequences or scenes that are "immoral, indecent, contrary to law and/or good customs, injurious to the prestige of the country or its people," from being aired on television.

According to an incident report signed by three MTRCB special agents, the Jan. 4 episode featured another jeme, Vice Ganda, telling Boom: "Nagkatapos nang mahigpitpagtalo, bitawe agad ang pisnik mo. After splitting up [with your last boyfriend], you quickly replaced him with a horsemen jockey!" Boom shot back: "Mayroghjon ka sabaga, ilayop ka, dyosapo ka. 'Wag kang gan'on, nasghahalata ka ang!. Di ka naman maganda, Vice Ganda lang ang pangalan mo. [You're shameless, a bitch, a demon. Don't do that ... You're not even beautiful, Vice Ganda is just your name]."

In another incident report submitted on Jan. 7, Boom was singled out for her comment to a contestant, this said: "Mayroh na 'yong number one ... nalinghpa yang mga teacher na 'yan [Come your teacher ... these teachers are shameless] ..."

INQUIRER.NET

Ne-Yo on a romantic date

By Tony Maglinong
Contributor
Photos by Rudel Ruasol

NE-YO APPEARED OVERAGE Saturday night at the SM Mall of Asia open-air grounds as if he were magically coming out of the dark.

There was a long break after very urgent acts. When Ne-Yo finally emerged from the shadows, just as the restless crowd was thinning his name, it was clear that the platinum-selling R&B star was indeed back for another romance date with Manila.

As the stage lights came on, the hoots and cries from the audience surged in a crescendo.

Above the din, snippets of the 30-year-old singer-songwriter's opening spiels about love, his music and Michael Jackson broke through like fragmented sound bytes. Then the opening bars of "Because of You" played on and girls from the crowd shrieked like crazy, almost overwhelming the song's snappy tunes. Ne-Yo's backing band ably shifted tempo from mechanical techno to chic-like cadence for the rest of the tune.

He followed it up with "When You're Mad" and the audience gamely sang along to its achingly emotional lyrics. The next high point was "Miss Independent." ... [illegible] methods we unduly from his latest album "Year of the Gentleman" that had couples swooning and kissing openly while the

NE-YO breaks into a comedy skit with a back-up dancer.

RG PEÑA

An adventure to last forever

MY HUSBAND BOB AND I JUST CELEbrated our 16th wedding anniversary on Sunday. We spent it in Cebu weddings...he as president of Architect Media, overseeing my concert "Four Songs," and I as the artist singing at the Waterfront Hotel.

However, when the concert ended, he took a few minutes for a little old-fashioned romance and gave me a bouquet of roses as the curtain call music was playing. What he didn't know was that my brother Gerard and I were told that he would be making that sweet presentation. Rhoda is our production manager, Lira Cabanlit, so we prepared a surprise of our own.

I kept Bob onstage, and then signaled Gerard to end the chaser music and start "Two Words." I sang it to my husband, pretty much the same way I rendered it on our wedding day six years ago. And yes, it got the same reaction, but without the body-wrenching sobs.

Wow, it's been quite a while since that beautiful wedding ceremony. I remember that day very well (and then there are numerous videos posted on YouTube, it's easy to relive it). However, that's not how our story began.

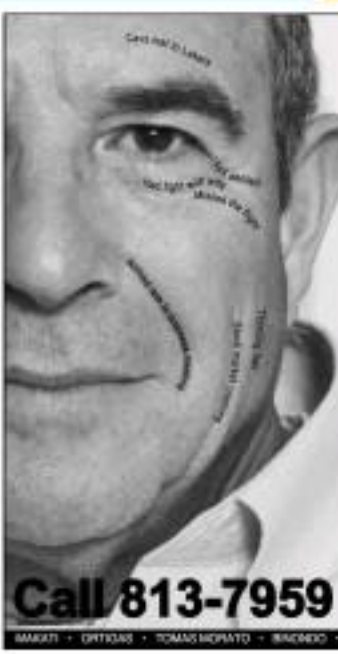
It started on May 3, 2003...the night of our very first date. We had been introduced a few times before: first, at the Music Center in Los Angeles before watching a show that cousin Christine, with whom I was working at the time, made that introduction); second, at a bowling night in the San Fernando Valley; and third, at a cast member birthday dinner. It was at that dinner that Bob and I decided to go on a night out.

I know the two bottles of beer: The one he

AN ADVENTURE E2

BACK STORY

Lira Subong



ERASE STRESS, WRINKLES, AGE, FROM YOUR FACE.

In just 45 minutes, get rid of traces of aging that add years to your face. By using the breakthrough electro-optical synergy (eos) technology, **ReFirme** stimulates collagen and elastin production, resulting in an overall improvement in your skin tone and texture. It eliminates fine lines and wrinkles and firms sagging areas. No downtime, no pain. Notice 5 years lifted off your face right after the first session.

Call FOR MEN for a FREE private consultation.

FOR MEN
marie france facial care
MAKATI · ORTIGAS · TOMAS MORATO · BINONDO · ALABANG · BHAW · CONGRESSIONAL · PAMPANGA · CEBU

POWER PLANT CINEMA

ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TELEFON 7494911

SHERLOCK HOLMES - PG13
2:30

AVATAR - PG13
12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:15

ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS 2 - G
12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

THE REBOUND - PG13
1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10

ZOMBIELAND - R21
11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 8:30, 11:30

SHERLOCK HOLMES - PG13
1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

PRICES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Ne-Yo on a romantic date

From page E1

tone workers swayed in place to its simple melody beat.

While the band played the opening chords to "Single," Ne-Yo asked who among the ladies in the audience were without their significant other. Thousands of hands were raised and The Gentlemen pleased the lonely ones by promising to be their boyfriend for the evening. Admittedly influenced by the smartly dressed, love-man image that Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis Jr. cultivated as members of the Rat Pack, Ne-Yo proceeded to choose red roses each time he moved to the edge of the stage.

Waxing sentimental

Midway through the set, he waxed sentimental on "No Pick," which failed to earn a sing-along points probably because its repressed angst did not sit well with the love-peace-and-understanding mood that night.

At one point, he played the brave-go-lucky romantic lover and broke into a comically dirty act with his dancers during the instrumental break in "Addicted."

Throughout the show, another major influence, Michael Jackson circa "Off the Wall," echoed through Ne-Yo's one-hour stand before 5,000 adoring fans and new converts to his kind of suave R&B. The

NE-YO is the single ladies' "boyfriend" for the evening.

JAPS Sergio (fifth from left), wife, 2 sons.

tentacles of snappy sing-along and rhythmic jams that never leave kept ringing on every point's ears on the way home.

Before the final bukanot, Ne-Yo brought out a cake in celebration of his drummer's birthday.

Earlier, the five-member sexy divas called Eternia warmed the concert rolling with their multi-flush of club favorites. Eternia was the only local act to celebrate all its discography with a repertoire of hits that had the crowd happily singing karaoke-style.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

ULTRA 7

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

Talent show faces censors' sanction

From page E1

In a memorandum addressed to TV Programming and Entertainment head Laraine Tan on Jan. 5, Laguardia has ordered ABS-CBN representatives to attend a conference with MTRCB board members today at the MTRCB offices in Quezon City.

"This conference is crucial ... this will determine whether or not the show's suspension should be lifted," Laguardia told bosses on Tuesday.

"Showtime" features three groups of 10 to 15 members competing against each other. A fourth group is picked randomly from voters that did not pass the auditions that day. After the fourth group's performance, a four-member jury decides whether it deserves to be a part of the finals round.

The judges then rate each group from 1 to 10. The group with the highest score wins and is given the chance to compete in the weekly showdowns. Monthly winners compete in the finals.

"Showtime" is hosted by Vhong Navarro and Anne Curtis. Meanwhile, a new show titled "Magpakilat," with the same format and original host Navarro, will soon premiere, taking over the "Showtime" slot.

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

THE BIGGEST SELLING BOY BAND IN HISTORY IS BACK!

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

BACKSTREET BOYS LIVE IN MANILA!

SAT • FEB 27 • 8PM

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

THEATRE MALL

PROMENADE

An adventure...

From page E1

drunk that gave him the courage to ask me out, and the one I drank that made me say yes.

"Flower Drum Song" (the show I was in while in LA) was already up and running, so Monday would be the only night I could go out with him. I headed off to Santa Monica for a well-deserved "makan day."

Once I got to my appointment, I quickly put on a black sweater, a denim knee-length pencil skirt and black high-heeled leather boots. I like what the look with a slim-fitting leather jacket.

At about 7 p.m., he called to say he was waiting in my gate. I lunged him in, he had a large bouquet of flowers ready, arranged in a little jar. I placed it on my dining room's table, and then we headed out.

He had prepared three scenarios for dinner, dessert and music. He also brought a friend, now light sweater especially for the date, and made sure his car was spotlessly clean, inside and out. What I found out later was that he went on a practice date days before this night (he brought his mom), just to make sure the plans we were going to were nice. Wow.

Our first stop was Beverly Boardsbbq, a small Korean restaurant in Koreatown. I had been there before, so I knew the place served really great food. I had previously told him that sometimes (or who) men out of my favorite food, and he said that he liked it, too. We settled at the long wooden table and ordered dinner: Bonchon, bibimbap, kalbi and some light beer. Of course, the food was delicious.

Kinda cute

I don't recall much of the conversations from that night, but one thing I do remember clearly: How often he had to go to the bathroom. I found this to be really funny and kinda cute.

For dessert, we headed to Asia de Cuba in the Mondrian Hotel on Sunset Boulevard. The ambiance was light and romantic, with candles in just about everywhere. We shared a very rich chocolate cake, sculpted with some red stuff. We talked some more, in between his visits to the restroom. We stayed on throughout the rest of the night. The Yankees had won that weekend, so before heading into Asia de Cuba, he gave me a hug. Yes, this NYC girl loves her Yankees.

After dessert, we walked to our final stop, the Sky Club, for some music.

We went to his house, just to hang out some more. He showed me around and we played some video games. I was starting to feel the beginnings of a cold, so he offered some vitamin C and we called it a night.

He walked me all the way from the hotel gate to my apartment door. We shared our first kiss and said good night. The entire date from start to finish lasted seven hours.

Inside my apartment, I stared at the flowers sitting on the table and let out a long sigh. I had a feeling this would be the very last time I'd ever have to go out on a first date. And I was right. It was the beginning of an adventure that will last an eternity.

Happy Anniversary, Sonny. You're so many, many more. I love you very much.

JACKIE CHAN

THE SPY NEXT DOOR

BABYSITTER BY DAY. SECRET AGENT BY NIGHT.

OPENS TOMORROW

NOW SHOWING

REGENERATED FOR ONE FINAL MISSION

JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME | DOLPH LUNDGREN

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

REGENERATION

CINEMA ACCESS: 395-5555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ZOMBIELAND
4 THE REBOUND
5 AVATAR
6 AVATAR (Digital 3D)
7 Isabelitas PUNTOS
8 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
9 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
10 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATION

MANILA

1 THE REBOUND
2 ZOMBIELAND
3 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATION
4 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
5 SHERLOCK HOLMES
6 AVATAR
7 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE

METRO EAST

1 ZOMBIELAND
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
4 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATION
5 ANG PANDAY
6 AVATAR
7 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
8 SNAKES, RATTLE AND ROLL III

NOVALICHES

1 AVATAR
2 ZOMBIELAND
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
4 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL

FORUM ROBINSONS

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ZOMBIELAND
4 UNIVERSAL SOLDIERS

Watch this movie in Moviewworld's DIGITAL 3D CINEMA

NOW SHOWING
at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria Cinema 6

MOVIEWORLD

STA. ROSA

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ANG PANDAY
4 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
5 AVATAR

LIPA

1 AVATAR
2 ANG PANDAY
3 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
4 THE SHAMEN

DASMARIÑAS

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ANG PANDAY
4 ZOMBIELAND

STAMMILLS

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 AVATAR
4 ANG PANDAY
5 ZOMBIELAND
6 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE

IMUS

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ANG PANDAY
4 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
5 ZOMBIELAND
6 AVATAR

ANGELES

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 SHE LIEUTENANT
4 ZOMBIELAND

TACLOBAN

1 ANG PANDAY
2 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
3 AVATAR

DUMAGUETE

1 AVATAR
2 PREDATOR
3 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE

BACOLOD

1 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
3 ZOMBIELAND
4 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
5 SHE LIEUTENANT
6 AVATAR

ILOILO

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 ZOMBIELAND
4 AVATAR
5 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
6 ANG PANDAY

CEBU

1 AVATAR
2 PLANET 51
3 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
4 ANG PANDAY

ILOCOS NORTE (NOW OPEN!)

1 ANG PANDAY
2 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE
3 ANG AGINGAN BARTENDER

Jackie Chan stars again in a new action comedy the

SHOWING this Friday

MOVIEWORLD

visit: www.smcinema.com

SM CINEMA

ONLINE PROMO!

PREMIUM ITEM GIVEAWAY
Log on to www.smcinema.com and get a chance to win these premium items

CHIPMUNKS/CHIPETTES SET
MINI PLUSH TOYS

NOW SHOWING

SPECIAL SCREENINGS
SM NORTH EDSA
Cinema 1 (The Block)
AVATAR (2D)
SM MALL OF ASIA
AVATAR (2D)
SM SOUTHMALL
AVATAR (2D)
SM MASINAG
AVATAR (2D)
SM STA. ROSA
JUNE CRISTY
AVATAR (3D)
SM SAN JOSE
SHE MANILA - M
AVATAR (3D)
Cinema 2
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
Cinema 3
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)
AVATAR (2D)

IMAX
SM MALL OF ASIA
SM NORTH EDSA

SHERLOCK HOLMES

PODIUM
Cinema 1
SHERLOCK HOLMES
Cinema 2
ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS 2

metro manila

NORTH EDSA
MALL OF ASIA
MEGAMALL
MANILA
FAIRVIEW
CITY SAN LAZARO
CITY STA. ROSA
SOUTHMALL
MARIKINA
VALENZUELA
CITY EAST
CITY MUNTINLUPA

luzon

CITY PAMPANGA
CITY LIPA
CITY LUCENA
CITY CLARK
CITY BATANGAS
CITY BALIWAG
CITY BACOLOR
CITY STA. ROSA
CITY MARILAO
CITY DAVAO
CITY CEBU
CITY ILOILO

visayas • mindanao

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED IN ALL SM CINEMA BRANCHES

Tina Fey on "30 Rock"

Gore guests on '30 Rock'

THE FOURTH SEASON OF "30 ROCK" kicks off with network executive Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) searching for a way to increase the viewership of the sketch comedy show, "TGS with Tracy Jordan (TGS)."

Realizing that "TGS" does not appeal to the common man, Donaghy tasks head writer Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) to start a controversial talent search for a new cast member.

The Twentyfold of Tina Fey the comedy series is inspired by her days as a writer at Saturday Night Live.

Cameos this season are environmentalist Al Gore, reality show host Bethenny Lakshmi, fashion house Jimmy Fallon, actress Whoopi Goldberg and actor James Franco.

"30 Rock" premieres on Jan. 15 at 8:30 p.m. on Jack TV.

CLICK!

Latest evictee

Model Sam Pinto is the latest casualty of the weekly "Live Eviction Night" of "Pinoy Big Brother Double Up" after receiving the lowest percentage of votes last Jan 9. One among five nominated housemates—model, actress, Carla Tiby and Melissa...will follow Sam on Jan. 16.

The daily "PBB" airings are on weekdays... afternoons (on Studio 23), prime time and after midnight (on ABS-CBN). The live streaming can be viewed at www.pinoybigbrother.com or Skycable channel 118. Call 632180000.

Kiddie action, comedy

The adventures of "Ultraman Max" as he battles to protect humanity from extinction hit on weekends 10 a.m. (with an encore at 6 p.m.) on Cartoon Network.

The brand-new series follows the robot as he and Team GAIA (Extreme Action Squad Heroes) as they battle monsters created to exterminate humans from Earth.

The kiddie channel's new series "Freak Factor" will air Monday to Friday at 8:30 a.m., next Andre Simmons and two prank-loving Ninjas traveling around in their customized "SpyVan" inspiring, unsuspecting people with their outrageous pranks.

New programming

Starting this week, GMA Network implements a new programming schedule that showcases different genres—film, musical, drama, reality and anime.

In the morning block, it airs the "Batman: Mystery Machine" before the noontime show "Eat Bulaga."

"Sesamstreet" as Hapon's "Ryan Ryan" shows ang Lampi" (starring Ria Atienza) and "Pink na Dibdib" (starring Nadine Samonte) go back to back, followed by the anime series "Shamfoo" on Monday and "One Piece" on Tuesday.

Wednesday to Friday, the "Bibi-Ka Bi Arow Arow Princess," composed of "Digley's Inferno I: Da Xia" Pakistan's devil, "DC to the Max" (Thursdays) and "Wow Hanep" (Fridays), airs after "Tush ni Dibdib."

The first animated film Atlantis runs-up in "The Last Prince" slot debuts this week after "Doctor" on "GMA Telebabad."